SICILY

PAINTED
BY
ALBERTO·PISA
DESCRIBED
BY
SPENCER C
MUSSON

914.5
M989S

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
DG862.5.M85 C001 V
SICILY LONDON
3 4211 000023838

WITHDRAWN

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/sicily0000albe

SICILY

AGENTS

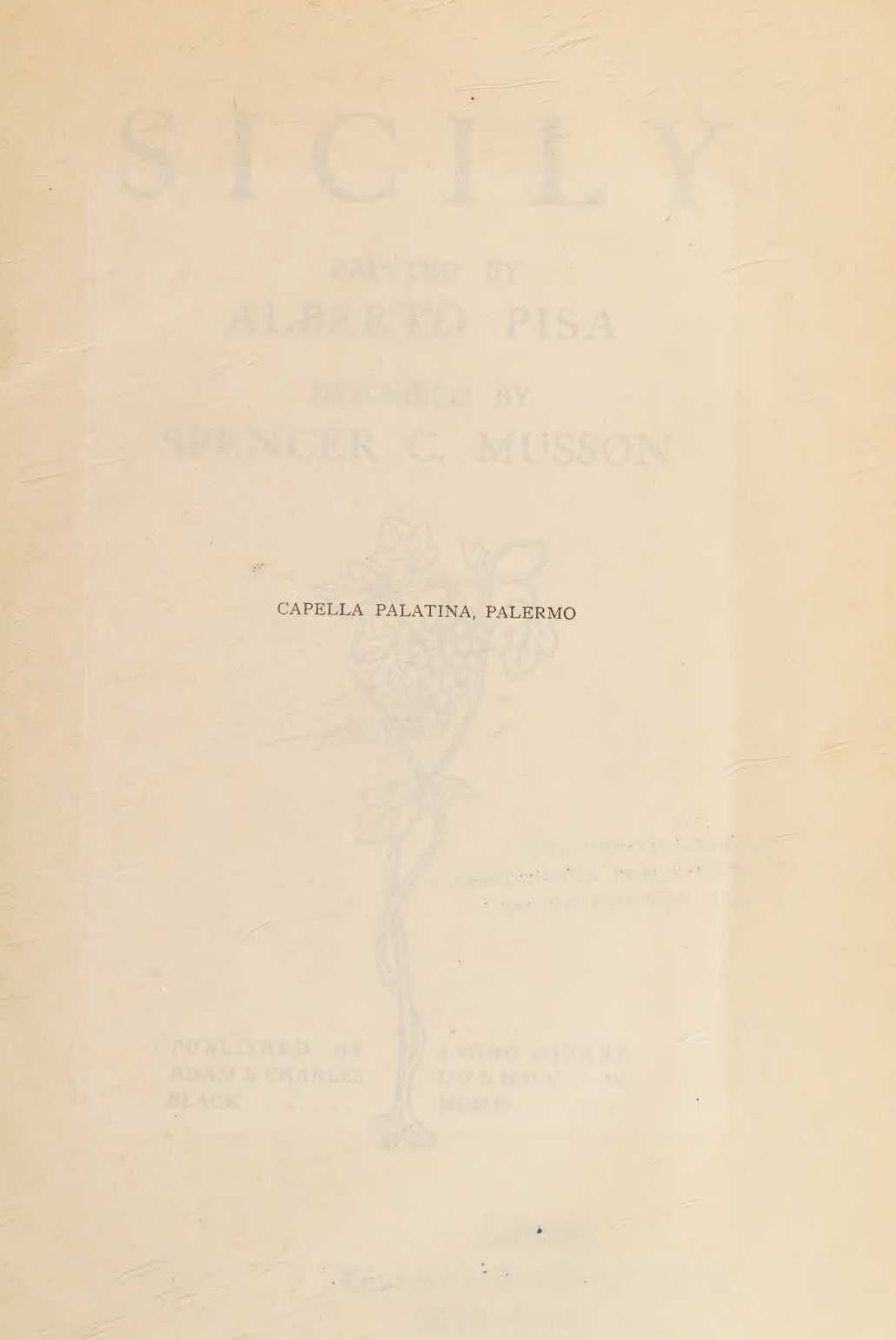
AMERICA . . . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
64 & 66 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

AUSTRALASIA . . . OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
205 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE

CANADA . . . . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, LTD.
ST. MARTIN'S HOUSE, 70 BOND STREET, TORONTO

INDIA . . . . . MACMILLAN & COMPANY, LTD.
MACMILLAN BUILDING, BOMBAY
309 BOW BAZAAR STREET, CALCUTTA

STUDENTS LIBRARY
CONCORDIA TEACHERS COLLEGE
RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS



CAPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO

SICILY

PAINTED BY

ALBERTO PISA

DESCRIBED BY

SPENCER C. MUSSON

STUDENTS LIBRARY
CONCORDIA TEACHERS COLLEGE
RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS

PUBLISHED BY ADAM & CHARLES BLACK . . . . . 4 SOHO SQUARE LONDON · W. MCMXI . . . . . .

Library
Concordia Teachers College
RIVER FOREST, IL

914.58
M989s

ΤΗΙ ΑΓΑΠΗΤΗΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΕΡΓΩΙ

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

L' ISOLA INCANTEVOLE - - - - - PAGE 1

CHAPTER II

THE ROYAL PALACE - - - - - 15

CHAPTER III

THE CATHEDRAL - - - - - - 23

CHAPTER IV

SICULO-NORMAN ARCHITECTURE - - - - 39

CHAPTER V

SICULO-NORMAN PSYCHOLOGY - - - - 62

CHAPTER VI

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF PALERMO - - - - 76

CHAPTER VII

THE NORTH-WEST CORNER - - - - 92

Contents

CHAPTER VIII

PAGE

SELINUNTE - - - - - 105

CHAPTER IX

MARSALA - - - - - - - 117

CHAPTER X

TRAPANI - - - - - - - 135

CHAPTER XI

FROM RAILWAY WINDOWS - - - - - 144

CHAPTER XII

GIRGENTI - - - - - - - 154

CHAPTER XIII

FUIT MESSINA - - - - - - 167

CHAPTER XIV

TAORMINA - - - - - - - 187

CHAPTER XV

BETWEEN TAORMINA AND SYRACUSE - - - 203

CHAPTER XVI

SYRACUSE IN HISTORY - - - - - 220

CHAPTER XVII

SYRACUSE TO-DAY - - - - - - 229

Contents

CHAPTER XVIII

PAGE

SYRACUSA CONSOLATRIX - - - - - 241

CHAPTER XIX

GREATER SYRACUSE - - - - - 252

CHAPTER XX

PANTALICA - - - - - - - 275

CHAPTER XXI

SIKELS, SIKELIOTS, AND SICILIANS - - - 288

CHAPTER XXII

HISTORICAL OUTLINE - - - - - 298

INDEX - - - - - - - 309

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NO.		FACING PAGE
1.	CAPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO	*frontispiece*
2.	TRAPANI AND THE AIGADIAN ISLANDS FROM CASTLE OF MONTE SAN GIULIANO	8
3.	SOUTH DOORWAY OF CATHEDRAL, PALERMO	24
4.	PROCESSION, MONTE SAN GIULIANO	32
5.	S. GIOVANNI DEGLI EREMITI, PALERMO	40
6.	NORTH-EAST VIEW OF THE CATHEDRAL, CEFALÙ	48
7.	IN THE CATHEDRAL OF MONREALE	50
8.	THE CLOISTERS, MONREALE	54
9.	THE MARTORANA, PALERMO	56
10.	CEFALÙ: SUNSET	64
11.	STREET IN CEFALÙ	72
12.	COAST NEAR TRAPANI AND ISLAND OF AIGOUSA, SCENE OF THE ROMAN NAVAL VICTORY, 242 B.C.	80
13.	LA CALDURA, CEFALÙ	88
14.	YARD AT MONTE SAN GIULIANO	96
15.	TEMPLE OF SEGESTA	98
16.	GARDEN AT MONTE SAN GIULIANO	102
17.	SEACOAST, SELINUNTE	104
18.	A DEAD CITY, SELINOUS	112
19.	PORT OF CEFALÙ	120
20.	RUS IN URBE, TAORMINA	128
21.	NEAR CALATAFIMI	130
22.	MONTE SAN GIULIANO, THE ANCIENT ERYX	134

List of Illustrations

NO.		FACING PAGE
23.	MONTE COFANO FROM PORTARELLA, TRAPANI	136
24.	CASTLE OF MONTE SAN GIULIANO	138
25.	S. GIOVANNI BATTISTA, MONTE SAN GIULIANO	142
26.	LA CALDURA, CEFALÙ	144
27.	LEMON-TREES: SPRING	152
28.	GIRGENTI FROM THE WEST	154
29.	THE TEMPLE OF CONCORD, GIRGENTI, FROM S. NICOLA	158
30.	GIRGENTI FROM THE GARDEN OF S. NICOLA	160
31.	SPRING DAY IN A VALLEY NEAR GIRGENTI	162
32.	BADIA VECCHIA, TAORMINA	166
33.	OLD HOUSES, TAORMINA	186
34.	THE THEATRE, TAORMINA	190
35.	VANISHING TAORMINA	192
36.	CORTILE PALAZZO CORVAIA, TAORMINA	194
37.	PALAZZO S. STEFANO, TAORMINA	198
38.	ETNA, GIARDINI, AND SCHISÒ FROM TAORMINA	200
39.	CASTROGIOVANNI	210
40.	STREET IN CASTROGIOVANNI	214
41.	STA. MADRE DEI MIRACOLI, SYRACUSE	232
42.	CONVENT OF THE CAPUCCINI FROM VILLA POLITI, SYRACUSE	240
43.	THE THEATRE AND STREET OF TOMBS, SYRACUSE	258
44.	SPRING AT SYRACUSE. VIEW OF ETNA AND THAPSOS FROM SITE OF TYCHE	262
45.	PORCH OF S. GIOVANNI, SYRACUSE	264
46.	LATOMIA DEI CAPUCCINI FROM VILLA POLITI, SYRACUSE	272
47.	GATEWAY AT TAORMINA	280
48.	PORTA SPADA, MONTE SAN GIULIANO	288

Sketch-map at end of volume.

SICILY

I

L' ISOLA INCANTEVOLE

I FIRST became acquainted with *l' isola incantevole* on a large wall-map, a delightful, unforgettable map, the one piece of generous colour in a sombre room, that obtained an amount of attention out of all proportion to the time allotted to geography in the curriculum. The lavish expenditure of paint culminated in the Mediterranean, a long sprawl of deliciously crude blue, set central in which was Sicily, a shining yellow triangle, the toe of a truculent red boot almost touching it, and seemingly in the act to kick. Nothing else in the map offered the same absorbing interest as that descending foot and that precariously placed triangle. I was proud of the aloofness and careless flaunt of the British Isles, the promontories of Scotland streaming into the blue like a flaming and tattered battle-flag ; but the British Isles I felt I knew, I had only to look out of the window to see them, and the rest of Europe was somewhat amorphous, mere inert provision for geography lessons. Here, in

mid-Mediterranean, was action, or, at least, a state of imminent action most promising for mischief. It could not be for nothing that all the volcanoes of the continent were congregated at that dramatic spot; sooner or later something must happen there. Three continents stood round in stolid expectancy; on the other side of the wall, the two Americas must certainly be aware that the old world contained this unstable area; sometimes, I believe, I half expected to see a ripple and hear a splash.

Of such literature, too, as came within childish studies, Sicily was the enchanted island, a borderland of fact and fable, the meeting-ground of gods and men, the haunt of quaint monsters and heroes, of half humanized powers of air, water and the nether world. The fascination survived into authentic annals. No people worth anything seemed able to keep their hands off Sicily. Even when history ceased to be specially concerned with the Mediterranean—that delightful domain of the story-teller—Sicily was always turning up with engaging irrelevance. One had not a notion of how the Saracens came to be there, but nothing could be better. Saracens always gave a ballad-lilt to history, and on this occasion afforded just the opening needed for an audacious Norman adventure. Even when the lamentable advance of civilization reduced most history to the dead level of modern politics, Sicily preserved a medieval liveliness by way of brigands and the Mafia. It was clearly a place to go to and see life.

Approach

Now, I find myself going there; and as, on a sunny December day, I lie on the poop of the good ship 'Bormida,' and watch the grey distance that is Sicily shaping itself into peaks and headlands, I ask myself whether the island will furnish forth in fact the enchantment with which fancy has invested it, or whether Sicily will take its place in the band of shattered illusions whose ranks swell so sadly as we grow older.

The coast shows up bravely on approaching; a hundred miles or so of land, all lofty and important, and standing up here and there in boldly piled blocks of mountains, one, almost central among them, peculiarly peaked and decided, its importance accentuated by a three-headed promontory flung boldly and carelessly seaward. As we approach, the uniform grey is more and more enwoven with colour; the salient mouldings of the hills kindle into rose; violet and purple smoulder in their hollows; the cliffs and steeper slopes above shimmer ruddy and tawny; the gentler slopes below brighten into green, the vivid green of grass and tilth, and the dusky green of olives; a silver fringe along the blue defines the junction of sea and land; the hazy hues above become flecked and streaked with white, a long line of which in the bight of the bay slowly forms into walls and domes and towers. This is Palermo, seated on the sea at the edge of the dense orange and lemon groves of the Conca d' Oro, which slopes up behind it, a dark, green undulating plain, backed and flanked by rugged mountains, two island-like blocks of which stand keeping watch and

ward on either side of the blue half-circle of the bay.

Every Italian city has its special epithet, and no one will dispute Palermo's claim to her title of *la Felice*, which is at least as old as the charters of the great Emperor Frederick, granted 'in urbe felici Panormo.' Sheltered from the cold winds of winter by the encircling heights, and with the fierceness of the summer heats tempered by the enfolding and enfolded sea, the purveyor and the mart of a region of almost unparalleled fertility, her haven wellnigh central in the immemorial waterways of civilization, emporium for the wares of three continents, the lines have surely fallen to her in pleasant places.

The traveller may perhaps think that the human response to this lavish guerdon of fortune is not, at a glance, conspicuous. So much has been written in the superlative about Palermo, as, indeed, about all Sicily, that a new-comer is apt to be disappointed. It is not a fine city in the ordinary sense of the term—long may it be spared from being so—nor is it one of those places of individual and compelling charm that are hard to quit, and that ever draw you to them again; but it is replete with interest, and, as you get to know it, you become conscious that a *genius loci*—more than usually elusive, and of singularly mixed ancestry—is gradually weaving about you a spell, which is difficult to define, but which is broadly distinguishable from other local spells.

Of course, apart from a few unique and superb

possessions, Palermo's claim to attention lies more in what it has been than in what it is, or rather in the intimate complication of the two, and this is, in truth, the claim of all Sicily. The island is like one of those persons who never let you forget that they have a past ; the past may not always be very edifying, still, there it is, differentiating them from those whose only claim to consideration rests on what they are. No Sicilian town is content to be taken for what it is ; every historically named tavern and thoroughfare would protest against the outrage ; the very stones would immediately cry out ; the long-descended beggars that haunt every storied quarter, the loafers at the thievish corners of the streets, the craftsmen, tradesmen, purveyors, parasites that batten on the past, the multifarious industries and businesses that exploit it like a gold-mine, would merge their ancestral feuds in a dream of Sicilian Vespers.

The visitor, wandering about Palermo, will not be slow to admit the claim. Not only in the great historic buildings, in castle, church and palace, but in squalid streets and dingy yards, in narrow alleys and malodorous courts, he will light on noble or pathetic relics—doorway and window, gate, arch and column—that make old ages live again. And these old ages are so various, so crowded with interest and import, the races, creeds, ideals, systems, of which Sicily has been the meeting-place and the battle-ground, which she has attracted, amalgamated, assimilated, are so diverse, the past and present are so subtly interwoven

by a thousand threads of continuity and consequence, that the life of to-day is hardly separable from the complex tapestry behind it.

Palermo, though it has never bulked large in general history, though it has not been, like Syracuse, the scene of one of those deathless dramas that have imposed themselves on the imagination of all time, has a special and pre-eminent place in the island story. Though among the latest born of famous Sicilian cities, she alone of them has been the metropolis of a distinct and independent Sicily.

Palermo had already had a long history when this supreme distinction fell to her. The city is supposed to have been founded by the Phœnicians when the increasing pressure of Greeks from the East led them to concentrate their scattered settlements in this remote north-west corner of the island, 'where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt.' Here had been the refuge of that mysterious Sikan population—with Professor Sergi assiduously ransacking tombs, photographing skulls, and casting all our received ideas into the melting-pot, we must beware of saying race—who claimed to be autochthonous, but our knowledge of whom is comprised in a group of negations. Here, too, were the Elymians, another of the elder peoples, of whom we know little save the name. Hither now came the Phœnicians, adding a Semitic factor to a population which is probably the least Aryan in Sicily.

It is true that now the Aryan seems by way of being somewhat elbowed out, and we are asked, on evidence

to which we cannot refuse a hearing, to believe that Elymian, Sikan, Sikel and Greek, are substantially the same, and that, may be, even more inveterate divisions among the peoples that crowd the Mediterranean basin had little anthropic basis. But, however inexact our terminology, the distinctions it indicated remain. Populations that may have been anthropically identical were ethnically profoundly parted. Ages of evolution, of alien experience and environment, all the history we know, and a psychological cleavage that no historic time can bridge, separated the thought and civilization of those who perhaps would not be differentiated by their pedigree, could we trace it, or their skulls, could we measure them.

Unlike the Sikan and the Sikel, who never felt safe but on the top of a hill, the Phœnician's first consideration was to be in touch with the sea, and his practised seaman's eye seized on the spot where now stands Palermo for the principal city of his contracted domain. It is unlikely that he would have chosen it had the conformation of the coast been what it is now, but at that time, and for the ships of that day, it was an ideal site for the settlement of a seafaring people. The original city was seated on a spit of land about a mile long, having a creek on either side, and at its end a pool which another spit, running thwartwise to the first, fenced off from the open bay, leaving only sufficient sea-way for ships to enter easily. On this smaller spit houses clustered later, which were known as the new town. The situation well merited the

earliest name by which we hear of the city, Panormos, the 'All-Haven,' as Freeman loves to call it. The Palermo of to-day, with a harbour that is little more than a roadstead, precariously protected by an artificial breakwater, may well envy the old Panormos, of whose triple haven only a shrunken remnant of the entrance pool, known as the Cala, now exists; the rest has been filled up through that strenuous transference of land by which the turbulent torrents of Sicily are ever wearing down its serried hills, and laying out their substance on the floor of the sea, or in little seaside plains.

Of the three contemporaneous Phœnician cities, Panormos alone remains, the other two—Solous on a rocky hill to the east of it, and Motya on a little island in the land-locked bight midway down the western coast—have for centuries lain desolate. Together with the other Phœnician settlements in the Mediterranean, those in Sicily passed under the hegemony of Carthage, and the loss of this central foothold, synchronizing with and symbolizing the loss of the command of the sea, was probably the critical event in the fall of that strange dominion which seemed so artificial and insubstantial, yet proved so tenacious. The magnificent struggle against doom maintained by the greatest master of war that ever lived might have had a different ending had Hannibal been able to use Sicily as a stepping-stone to Italy, instead of leading his motley host of mercenaries over the Pyrenees and the Alps.

TRAPANI AND THE AIGADIAN ISLANDS FROM
CASTLE OF MONTE SAN GIULIANO

The Roman conquest of Western Sicily, towards the end of the first Punic war, saved Europe from this incalculable disaster. For awhile the eternal antagonism between Aryan and Semite, of which the island had so long been the battle-field, was stayed, and the romance of Sicilian history was submerged in the dead level of the *pax romana*. During the long agony of that beneficent despotism the heterogeneous components of the population renewed the immemorial strife, and chaotic anarchy within tempted marauders from without. Sicily became a no-man's-land, where any lawless spirits might seek spoil and adventure, or set up an ephemeral dominion, till in the sixth century the long arm of the Byzantine Empire laid its heavy hand upon the island, and Sicily slumbered for nigh three hundred years under an administration that was once more Greek in speech, though as alien as can well be conceived from the old Hellenic spirit.

In the ninth century the Semitic flood, into which Islamism had breathed new energy, again surged over the Mediterranean lands, and Sicily became once more the theatre of the secular strife. To the old antagonism of race and temper was now added the deep hate of two exclusive religions. Profoundly parted as were the bright Hellenic fancies concerning the spiritual world from the gloomy introspection and the forbidding idolatry of Canaan, yet these were but the mythological expression of the tempers of two alien races, each of whom probably believed in, while they detested, the gods of the other. But now, two

great monotheistic religions, each claiming to be sole trustee of truth and salvation, and each of which in evolution from the teaching of its founder had assumed a form that peculiarly expressed the spiritual and social ideals of the populations championing it, were locked in deadly grapple. At last the long controversy had become an issue of life and death.

For a time, in the eleventh century, it looked as though the Moslem and the Orient had won. After three-quarters of a century of fierce fighting, the entire island passed under Saracenic dominion, which was consolidated during two hundred years of enlightened and beneficent rule. For the first time Sicily was a single independent State, with Palermo as its capital. It must have seemed as though for the rest of her story she was to be a handmaid of Islam, an outpost of Asia planted at the gates of Europe, when Robert Wiscard, with a few ships, sailed into the harbour of Messina.

It is a pity that Sicily had not still Thucydides to tell, in the immortal fashion he told the siege of her great eastern city, the epic struggle of thirty years which followed, and which resulted in the island being a Norman kingdom for two centuries. From that time to the present day Palermo has been the Sicilian capital, and its subsequent history is part of the history of Sicily, of which, I suppose, even so casual a book as this must somewhere give an outline. Of all the races that have reigned in the island, none count for less in the blood and nature of the population than the Norman, and

none count for more in their destiny. The Normans did not find in Sicily, as in the contemporaneous conquest of a greater island in the north, a kindred, and a fairly homogeneous people, with whom they readily identified themselves—speaking their speech, and calling themselves by their name—and by whom they were in the end absorbed. The Norman in Sicily remained throughout an alien to the motley races whom he amalgamated, and for whom he did a work that none of them could do for themselves. When that work was done he passed as utterly out of the material life of the island as the Frank and Gothic raiders who had preceded him. But his work endured, and he yet speaks in all things Sicilian. The Sicilian of to-day is what he is because those northern aliens laid strong hands upon his land, and ruled it for two hundred years. With the Norman conquest the long debate that had sown the soil of Sicily with the dust of many peoples was closed. In the years that were coming Sicily was to know many masters, and to pass through strange experiences, but never more would she be a daughter of Canaan ; through all vicissitudes, her social fabric and her spiritual outlook were Aryan, Christian and of the West.

Of this memorable governance Palermo was 'prima sedes, corona regis et regni caput,' as is proudly recorded on her cathedral, and the city and its neighbourhood are thickly set with memorials of this golden age. The conformation of the land has greatly changed even since Norman times, still more since the days

when the Phœnicians fixed on it as the chief seat of a dominion whose base was the sea. That earliest Panormos must have been a strip of closely packed buildings where now is the Corso, which runs down the city like a dorsal bone, on each side of which the surface descends to a widespread maze of narrow, low-lying streets which have replaced the two creeks. 'Here where the long street roars hath been' the lapping of land-locked water and the creaking of crowded ships.

It may be partly due to changes of this kind that, with the exception of a few doubtful masses of masonry, no memorials exist of the city's founders, but this hiatus in the records of her past is universal in Sicily. It is strange that no fragment remains of temples raised for the dark idolatries of Canaan, which must once have stood on many a 'high place' throughout the island, and which in outward aspect and adornment probably differed little from that most famous of all temples, which the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, raised upon Mount Zion for king Solomon. Greek temples still stand in almost pristine beauty, those of the Romans survive in many a Christian church, but of the shrines that sheltered the bloody worship of Moloch and the obscene rites of Ashtaroth not one stone is left upon another; they have been as utterly destroyed as though upon Sikel, Greek and Roman had been laid the pitiless commands issued to Joshua on the going down unto Jordan.

But if the Phœnician have no monument in builded

stone, he is nowhere without a witness among the people. The traveller is apt in such matters to see what he has been led to expect, and certainly it is very easy to persuade oneself that one sees the Semite in Palermo. Nor is it difficult, though possibly the facility is born of ignorance and imagination—that congenial and prolific couple to whom life owes so much of its interest and enjoyment—to fancy one sees examples of the interesting statement recorded by Freeman as made to him by 'one practised in measuring skulls, that the prevalent type of skull, even in modern Palermo, agrees with what we should expect the Sikan skull to be.'

Even the traveller's imagination finds it hard to see representatives of the Norman in the population that, to their latest day, will bear the print of his hand. Here and there a blue-eyed, blond-complexioned individual is detected in the swarthy and motley throng, and duly kodaked and labelled as of the Norman type, but history acquaints races with strange bedfellows, and I fancy that, could their genealogy be traced, it would seldom lead back to the Vikings. Indeed, we are apt to forget how small was the proportion of Normans in these conquering expeditions. The Norman element was but the proverbial and all-important steel tip to the lance. As in the battle-roll of Senlac we are struck with the numbers of Provençals, Angevins, Gascons and what not, so among the followers of Robert and Roger we find representatives from almost every region of Southern Europe. These were easily absorbed by the kindred population of the

island, leaving the Norman occupation of Sicily but a chapter of history, the chapter that Sicily could least spare, and of which the subsequent chapters are but the sequel.

Yet is the Norman also not without a witness. He and the Greek, alone of the races that have ruled in the island, built for themselves enduring memorials, structures as unlike one to another as can well be conceived, yet alike in having the stamp of rare quality, in being each the peculiar expression of a select and noble nature. While, however, the Greek temple was perfected by a simultaneous and identical evolution throughout the Hellenic world—an evolution in which Sikeliot building took no mean part—the imposing and sombre architecture that the Norman brought from his distant home was touched in Sicily with a Saracenic lightness and grace, and flooded with an oriental opulence of colour, that produced an individual style, one of the most beautiful in the world. If the traveller be disappointed on first landing at Palermo, let him take his way forthwith to the Capella Palatina, built by Roger, the first king of Sicily, and he will feel, from whatever part of the world he may have come, that his journey has not been in vain.

II

THE ROYAL PALACE

At the head of the long main street already mentioned, that nearly marks the watershed of the tongue of land on which the first Phœnician city was built, the palace stands on a gentle eminence which, commanding the interlacing land and water of the then port, was probably from the first the site of the citadel. Here, certainly, the Saracens had a vast stronghold, Al Kasr, which—altered, extended and strengthened—became the residence, court and fortress of the Norman kings.

The chapel has been so embedded with later buildings that its original richly ornamented exterior is lost. It is now entered on the south from the first-floor of an arcaded court. Outside the door, an inscription in Latin, Greek and Arabic, referring to a long-vanished water-clock put up for Roger by a Maltese, reminds us that in the twelfth century Palermo was still the 'trilingual city' where a medley of antagonistic races were being welded together in the masterful Norman grasp ; the racial trinity is symbolized in the building.

On first entering, one is conscious of nothing but

an overmastering sense of colour, that seems not only to cover arch, wall, and roof, but to lurk in every shadow, to palpitate in the air. Then, piece by piece, we realize a wealth of decoration, a profusion of costly material, a prodigality of exquisite workmanship that, I should say, can be nowhere else found crowded into a similar space. As the eye commences to dwell with individual delight on different objects, one is almost bewildered at the lavish completeness that has left no part of the building or its furnishing unadorned ; yet this universal and minute finish in no way destroys artistic breadth and harmony ; the whole is wrapped in a large solemnity, a delicate, unworldly charm in which detail is absorbed unless we care to observe it. It is here that Wagner is said to have conceived the mystic chapel of the Holy Grail, which was as an arching forest-glade, wrought over with gold and precious stone.

The plan is a combination of the Greek and Latin arrangement, with three terminal apses. The arches throughout are Saracenesque, rising straightly for a little space before taking the inward curve. The unusually high stilt in this church, necessitated by the antique columns only 16 feet high, gives a peculiar air of grave stateliness to the interior. The columns are alternately of Greek marble, vertically or spirally fluted, and of smooth Egyptian granite. The floor and the steps that rise to the chancel are of inlaid marble, so is the pulpit, which is supported by columns of peach-flower marble, some of which are also in the

side apses, and are almost unique. The chancel enclosure is of perforated and inlaid marble; balustrades of crimson porphyry enclose the side apses. The roof is of wood, slanting in the aisles, the little rafters and the rounded hollows between them exquisitely illuminated with gold and colour. Over the nave is Moorish honeycomb vaulting, the general tint a deep blue-green that is shadowed in the coffers,

> Like the waves after ebb going seaward,
> When their hollows are full of the night.

The details of the delicate picturing can only be made out with difficulty, and it is perhaps well that this is so, as much of it is more what we should expect in Aladdin's palace than in a Christian church. In these dim and lofty recesses, the Arab craftsman has allowed himself a free hand—free, indeed, from Islamic as well as Christian restrictions. With an exuberance of imagination that recalls Persian and Indian, rather than Saracenic design, he has crowded within a maze of floral decoration, bordered by Cufic lettering, scenes from oriental life and legend, chess-playing and drinking, games and hunting, music and dancing, beasts, birds and composite monsters.

The marble paschal candlestick seen beside the pulpit in the sketch is, in its bold, harmonious, decorative effect, its quaint figures, its classical and oriental detail, a fine example of the burst of sculptural exuberance that marked the eleventh century. The upper part, of later

but quite congruous work, has a presentiment of the Renascence.

Light falls on the chancel from the windows of a narrow dome of hazy, dreamlike loveliness. There are smaller domes in front of the side apses ; all are lustrous with mosaic. In the larger is a striking portrayal of Christ, the extenuated features, the raised eyebrows, the curled lip, the abstracted gaze, seem expressing a weary scorn of humanity. With this intellectual conception may be compared the grave, serene face of the Saviour in a mosaic at the west end, and the imperial figure in the central apse.

The lower part of the walls is throughout panelled with the grey-veined marble known as cipollino, and each panel is edged with an inlay of coloured marbles, rich and delicate as oriental embroidery. Above this panelling, the whole surface of the walls and arches is covered with deep-hued mosaic on a golden ground, representing the sacred history of the world and known as 'King Roger's Bible.' A document of 1132, signed by Peter, archbishop of Palermo, still exists, declaring this chapel of St. Peter a parish church, 'by the express desire of King Roger.' No monarch could have raised for himself a nobler memorial, or made to his people a more royal gift. It may be doubted whether, four centuries later, Luther and Gutenberg combined, gave the Scriptures more effectively to the people than did these pictured walls. In days when the Church was still the community, when books were rare and costly, and none but clerks could read, they constituted as

truly a Bible in the vulgar tongue, in the universal language of the eye, as can well be conceived.

The pictured Bible story, as well as the wealth of detail in form and colour, are only to be seen to advantage in the morning light. But there is no light in which the building is not beautiful as a dream ; perhaps, even, its magic and its mystery are best felt when the sun is too high to enter any window directly, and the uncertain light that filters in is reflected from, and refracted by, a thousand facets. Beautiful is the effect when this irradiated gloom gradually enwraps the interior after the rich and fugitive illumination of the early sun.

A forenoon spent as day displaces darkness, and again gives way to the restful and opulent twilight of noon, has hours never to be forgotten. Gradually, as the sun gets high, its light streams in and illumines part after part of that glorious picturing ; wall and vaulting, arch and column, catch its light, and break it up, and cast it back ; the dim air kindles into mystic radiance, the solid masonry seems transfused, hardly material, impalpable as a rainbow-tinted cloud, and the little church is no more a temple made with hands, but a tabernacle of elemental light. The murmurous chanting of the priests sounds as the incantation of a larger synthesis than creeds and formularies can syllable ; the spirits of dead religions seem to have sanctuary in the shadows ; the old faiths whose shrines were spoiled for the building, the Islamism, which lent a touch of inimitable grace to its architecture, and whose votaries

toiled for its adornment, these and many more are there, their 'broken lights' made pure and clear, blended in the all-comprehending Word. Around and above, transfigured in a glory of golden light and interwoven tint and floating hue, are patriarchs and prophets, apostles and saints, and a white-winged host of heaven, while, supreme above all, set on high in the shadowy apse, where no ray of sun can reach, shaping dimly and mysteriously, in light reflected from roof and wall, or struggling upwards from innumerable tapers, is a blue-robed imperial form, holding an open book, in which is written: 'I am the Light of the world.'

It is a pitiful anticlimax to turn from this to the modern erection that flaunts in atrocious incongruity across the west end of the church, where an imitation mosaic portrait of the king of Italy, as smart as a military tailor can make him, unblushingly confronts the majestic form of the Saviour. Very different is the spirit of the old mosaics, in which the great Roger receives his crown from the King of Kings.

The palace contains one other noble and perfectly preserved relic, known as Roger's chamber, an exquisite little vaulted room, its floor, walls and ceiling covered with inlaid marble and mosaic, representing hunters and objects of the chase, beloved of Norman kings. The unexpected appearance of the German two-headed eagle among the royal game is, of course, a later addition, recalling a splendid, brief and troubled episode in the annals of the Sicilian dynasty. In the apex of the

vault is the crowned eagle of the royal Norman house with a hare in its talons.

Beyond Roger's chapel and his room, there is now little in the palace worth seeing, but its banality is redeemed by the exquisite views framed by every window. In front, the delicate towers of the cathedral, their tawny stone lit almost to gold in the sunshine, stand out against the deep blue rim of sea and the light blue dome of sky ; on either side and behind, the dark green undulations of the Conca d' Oro swell gently to the hills that fence it round. It is worth while mounting the tower of Santa Ninfa to have the complete panorama. Standing there, we survey the former royal domain of the Normans, strangely changed by nature and man. We can distinctly trace the depressions in which the sea in their days stretched up from the spacious land-locked port that has shrunk to the present Cala. Around the city lay the vast parks and gardens of the royal domain, studded with stately palaces—the Favara, Cuba, Ziza, and Mimnernum. Neglected and disfigured remnants give us some idea of the rich and delicate magnificence of the buildings, but the gardens, lakes, and fountains to which they owed their peculiar enchantment have vanished. The name of the glaring and squalid village of Parco is a pathetic reminder of the ancient extent of this 'boundless contiguity of shade.'

The *Ziza* is the fragment in which most original work remains. It stands in a dusty square on the western outskirts of the city, by a solitary stone-pine,

sole representative of its famous groves. It has been woefully mishandled, but the central hall, still lovely with marble, mosaic, and falling and flowing water, shows that it must once have justified the Arabic inscription that proclaims it an earthly paradise. The alcoves of this hall are vaulted with beautiful stalactitic moulding, as is also the chapel, which has been made the sacristy of a neighbouring church.

III

THE CATHEDRAL

At the head of the Corso is the cathedral, which, though lacking the solemnity that should enshadow a great church, is a pleasing edifice in which the rich sun-burnt tint of the stone harmonizes well with an indefinable oriental character. In this, as in much else, it symbolizes the population of which it is the metropolitan fane ; a thousand years of Sicilian history have carved their record in those tawny stones ; could we read the fragmentary tale of old foundations beneath the pavement, the record would be longer still. One of the earliest Christian churches in the west of the island is said to have stood here, marking the spot where it was believed St. Peter preached on his way to the Eternal City. This primitive church was converted into a mosque, and again re-converted into a church, which served as the earliest cathedral under the Norman kings. In the latter half of the twelfth century, the then archbishop, Walter of the Mill, replaced it by a larger one, of which destructions and additions have left little remaining in the present

edifice. The crypt, the apse, the windows above the aisles, portions of the southern wall, and the lower part of the bell tower, now embedded in the archbishop's palace and connected with the church by a viaduct archway thrown across the street, are the most we can claim as the work of the old Englishman. There is little else in the building that can be much older than the fourteenth century; the beautiful southern porch must be a century later, and is perhaps the earliest Spanish work in Palermo. The grey marble columns with richly wrought capitals that support its arches are far older, and are said to have belonged to the mosque, if not to the earliest church; that on the left has a Cufic inscription:

> God made day and night that follows it. Moon and stars obey His Voice. He is the Creator and Lord of all. Blessed be the Eternal God.

This porch, the fine-pointed Gothic of the west front, and, indeed, all the earlier work in the building, cannot be classed with any other architecture in Europe; it can only be styled Sicilian. The stilted arches, the mingling of Greek and Saracenic designs with apparent anticipations of Renascence ornament in the decoration of the windows, and the diapered bands and panels of the exterior walls, show that, whatever master-builder may have planned and ordered, the hands that worked out his instructions were those of the great arts and crafts school maintained by the Norman kings in the Trilingual City, a school which, through deplorable

SOUTH DOORWAY OF CATHEDRAL,
PALERMO

aberration and decadence, preserved its old traditions till art and tradition were alike submerged in the tasteless extravagances of the baroco.

In spite of ill-assorted detail, sometimes mean and crude, at others, florid, involved, and overladen, the church remained a unique, historic, and architectural monument till 1781, when one Fuga, a Neapolitan, under the auspices of Ferdinand I., carried out a work of deliberate destruction and dismantlement. In the exterior, the main disfigurement is the unsightly central dome—singularly out of harmony with the general horizontality of the edifice—and the mushroom-like crop of little cupolas above the aisles. Within, almost every architectural feature of the earlier building has been ruthlessly stripped away. Perhaps the most incomprehensible outrage was the removal of the tombs of the kings from their original resting-place in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament by the choir to the south-west angle of the church. It is almost inconceivable that it should have been thought that anything justified the tearing away of these august monuments, the peculiar and glorious trust of the church, from their ancient sanctuary beside the holiest places of the building, and shunting them to this out-of-the-way corner. Here, in the last two bays of the southern aisle, now stand the huge chests of porphyry which, through all the stormy changes of Sicilian history, have guarded the dust of those great rulers who gave that history the final trend that, through all vicissitudes, it never lost. Under a canopy of mosaicked marble, Roger, *strenuus*

dux et primus rex, rests in a massive sarcophagus supported at either end by four crouching Saracens. By his side is his daughter, Constance, styled in the inscription 'the last of the royal race of the Northmen,' wife and mother of emperors who defied Rome, and died under the papal ban. In front of her tomb is that of her husband, Henry VI., and beside this, under a columned canopy of porphyry, is that in which Freeman considers 'the Empire of the West as a true and living thing lies buried,' for here in the most massive and ornate of the sarcophagi, supported by four lions crouching over their prey, repose the remains of the Emperor Frederick II., 'the wonder of the world.' Recessed in the western wall is a Roman sarcophagus of white marble, faced with a crowded and spirited relief of a lion-hunt; in this are the remains of Constance, the widow of Ammeric, king of Hungary, who married Frederic II. of Aragon.

Two of the most notable among the founders of modern Sicily are wanting in the august assemblage, the brother conquerors, doughty comrades between whom no love was lost, Robert, who first joined battle with the Infidel, and the gifted and chivalrous Roger, 'the Grand Count,' who first ruled the whole island from Palermo, and 'nothing lacked of kingship but the name;' Robert lies far off on a rocky Ionian island, and Roger in Naples, which was to rob Palermo of its primacy.

The royal sarcophagi were opened in 1781, when they were removed from their ancient position. It was

found that antecedent sacrilege had already rifled those of Roger I. and Constance, which contained nothing but fragments of bones. The remains of the two emperors, however, appeared to be as they had been laid to rest. The form of Henry was wrapped in a mantle of rich brocade ; at his feet was the imperial *mitra* with an Arabic inscription ; thick, fair hair was upon his head, and a russet beard upon his chin ; on his breast were the tresses of hair which Constance cut from her head and laid there when he was entombed. Why? She had never loved, and could not have honoured him ; a dark suspicion lurked that she was not innocent of his death, which, it may well have seemed, the fortunes of her house and the welfare of her people called for. Was this last tribute the expression of passionate protest, or tardy remorse, or of personal fealty that had ceded to more imperious claims ? The great Frederick was enveloped in three magnificent tunics fastened with a silver brooch ; on his forefinger was an emerald ; on his head a crown of gold set with pearls ; his sword lay by his side, and the imperial orb by his hand. With his body had been enclosed those of Peter II. of Aragon and Duke William, son of Frederic II. of Aragon, as though that majestic shade retained a primacy, even among the dead, and the lesser men sought sanctuary *sub magni nominis umbra* of their mighty predecessor.

The royal seat in the choir is higher than the cathedra, for the Sicilian kings, not as temporal sovereigns, but as hereditary legates of the See of Rome, were of superior ecclesiastical rank to the archbishops

of Palermo. I presume their successors sit in their seat, but it may be doubted if the Vatican recognizes them as its legates. The finely carved stalls in walnut are probably as purely Spanish as any work in Palermo, and happily escaped the destructive Fuga. 'The continent,' which, as the sacristan is careful to inform the visitor, sent this architect of ruin to the island, made amends by the gift of the Gagini. Antonio Gagini, a native of Bissone, came to Sicily towards the end of the fifteenth century, and, during nearly a hundred years, he and his sons and nephews enriched the churches of the island with numerous works of a peculiar charm. Few schools of the time have such a direct personal equation with the present day. Scattered about the church are numerous reliefs, too small to have any architectural effect, but exquisite in workmanship, and replete with idiosyncrasy and imaginative grace. Among the most beautiful and characteristic is a canopied holy-water stoup, on a northern pillar of the nave, opposite the entrance. The travesty of it on the corresponding southern pillar is an example of the uselessness of noble models when artistic feeling has died out.

The crypt, an impressive and most interesting piece of building, is one of the few links between the island churches of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the contemporaneous architecture of Northern Europe. We might, almost as we enter it, imagine ourselves beneath a cathedral of our island, till, as the eye becomes at home in the dim light, it notes encrusted

mosaic and classical details. Very fine are the short massive columns, from which spring slightly pointed arches with no suggestion of stilt, and Gothic vaulting.

In massive chests of stone and marble, some inlaid with mosaic, some with early Greek ornamentation, showing they were appropriated from previous pagan occupants, are the remains of twenty-eight archbishops, including our fellow-countryman, Walter of the Mill. How strange seems the occurrence of that homely English surname in the annals of this southern and half oriental island, and how quaint is the transformation of it to Offamillius, instead of the usual translation. As one deciphers the time-worn inscription, imagination wanders from the sombre subterranean church beneath the roar of a great city to some quiet brook meandering through a green land under low, grey skies, past one of those rude and picturesque mills, that look as though they had dreamed through all the centuries of our island story, and that are among the most ancient human landmarks in English scenery. When, however, we mount to upper air, and, issuing into the broad sunlight of the square, look up to the roof of the great building, we realize that we can be nowhere but in very southern Europe. On every spire of the church is an aureoled effigy of a saint, doing duty as weathercock, assuredly the most flippant use to which men ever put their saints, who should stand for something of the eternal steadfastness. Yet the Palermitans have set them here on high—the Blessed Virgin on the topmost spire, and a crowd of minor tutelaries on pinnacles

below—veering from moment to moment and seeming thoroughly to enjoy being thus bandied about; clinging to the cross with one hand, and leaning well to leeward, they wave the other gleefully, for all the world as though they had been relieved from duty at their shrines below and were having a time-off on the roof.

I do not suppose that it would ever strike the pious Palermitan or his priest that there was anything irreverent in this. They and their saints are too much at home with one another, too knit together by the kindly give-and-take of daily intercourse to stand on ceremony. It is mainly with these minor deities that the religion of their daily life has to do. I fancy they look on the Supreme Being as far too occupied with great affairs to be able to give attention to what may be called departmental details. These are delegated to various subordinate providences; often, indeed, their purview is merely local, restricted to the concerns of some little hill-town, or sequestered rural neighbourhood, beyond which the saints' names are neither known nor honoured, but with whose people they have been associated for centuries in a mutual acquaintance and regard that has produced on either side a sentiment of special proprietorship. Neither expects too much of the other, but the expectations are very precise and insistent.

There is no human concern or interest that is not the special charge of some one or other of the great company of heaven. The saints—or at least some of them—are

not over-fastidious in the work that they undertake. San Pantaleo specially presides over lotteries, and is applied to for tips as to lucky numbers ; there is a San Lorenzo dei Liquori, and certainly in no department of life is ghostly supervision more desirable ; there are said to be saints, the church's compensation for Hermes, who take thieves under their particular protection, and whose favour is invoked on their enterprises. After all, the popular hagiology does not, on a superficial view, differ greatly from the old polytheism that it displaced. In this, as in much else, Christianity took the existing framework of habit, that centuries of human need and craving had elaborated, hallowed it with deeper significance, and touched it to higher aspiration. Infinitely superior as are the catholic saints to the old 'joyous gods that winked at fault and folly,' they are such stuff as human beings are made of, nor is their celestial horizon yet so transcendent as to distract them from the small mundane concerns of their special province in the vast administrative system of Providence. Homely, human personages, too much must not be expected of them, and they on their part will not be extreme to mark what is amiss in their votaries. Not so long ago they lived in the world ; they know how hard and complicated is life, how absorbing its cares, how bewildering its distractions, how pleasant its temptations. They are not so far removed from these things but that they can be pleased by the simple gratifications that appeal to their worshippers ; they enjoy fine clothes and jewellery, and being carried in

Library
Concordia Teachers College
RIVER FOREST, ILL.

processions, and entertained with fireworks. Given proper attention on the votary's part, the divine division of labour ought to insure general efficiency, and any failure in the good results that might be expected is looked on as a breach of implied contract that may have to be painfully brought home to the delinquent.

Gaston de Vullier has collected a number of instances of the manner in which neglect of duty is visited in Sicily on defaulting saints. It is especially in regard to weather that the supernatural functionaries are kept up to the mark. It is felt that this ought to be a matter of everyday saintly routine, which should work without a hitch. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are exceptional and overwhelming occurrences, a certain unreadiness to cope with which may be excused, but rain and fruitful seasons—of constant and vital importance to a hard-working, agricultural population — simply require regular seeing to, and ought not to make a great demand on any saint that is worth his candles. Unfortunately, experience shows that they are matters in which Sicilian saints are peculiarly apt to be remiss. S. Francesco de Paolo is one of those who are specially occupied about rain—at least, he ought to be. Every spring priests and people escort his image through orchards and gardens, and in time of drought processions with banners, candles and fireworks, supposed to be dear to the saintly heart, implore his good offices. If this have the desired effect, well and good ;

PROCESSION, MONTE SAN GIULIANO

but sometimes the saints are unaccountably negligent, and have to be reminded that they cannot expect candles and fireworks for nothing. With all his impulsiveness, *quid pro quo* is a basal principle in the Sicilian conception of life, and his religion is no exception to it. The purpose of human existence propounded in the Shorter Catechism would seem to him a very one-sided bargain on the part of the Deity.

At Ganzi, during a prolonged drought, when chants and vespers had been sung in vain, the priests, followed by the whole population, went in solemn procession to the Church of S. Spirito, to supplicate rain ; still the heavens were as brass. At length the people could stand it no longer ; the saints were boycotted and subjected to every contumely. At Palermo, S. Giuseppe was turned out into a garden that he might see for himself what cultivation was being reduced to by his selfish love of fine weather. Some saints were put in dark corners, or stood with their faces to the wall ; others were stripped of their gorgeous robes and clad in the rags to which their indolence was reducing their votaries. At Caltanisetta, Michael the Archangel was divested of his golden wings, equipped in mockery with paper substitutes, and his purple robe exchanged for rags. At Licata, the patron S. Angelo was not left even a rag ; reduced to such nudity as a statue is capable of, he was handcuffed, reviled and derided, and menaced with being ignominiously pitched into the sea, were rain not shortly forthcoming.

Mr. Festing Jones relates that this last indignity is from time to time actually inflicted on the painted wooden image of S. Cologero, the patron of a small town near Girgenti. In prolonged dry weather the inhabitants flock to the church and surround the statue with threatening cries of 'Rain or rope.' If the saint choose the better part and rain fall, he is duly honoured, but if he prove recalcitrant, he learns that his votaries bear not the cord in vain ; it is tied round his neck, the other end being made fast on shore ; when in due course rain arrives, his satisfied clients let bygones be bygones ; he is hauled to land, given a fresh coat of paint, and reconducted with music and thanksgiving to his church.

All this may excite a smile, perhaps a protest ; it is very pagan and very human, but at least it indicates a sincere belief in the power of these departmental divinities, if not always in their good-will. And is there not something touching in this naïve, familiar faith in supernatural personages, not so far removed from humanity but that they can be touched with a feeling of its infirmities, even of its vanities and foibles?

The Museum of Palermo is as charming a building for the housing of antiquities as can be imagined—an old convent, with two cloistered courts in the best style of the Renascence, the arches and the windowed walls above them festooned with roses and clematis, the courts crowded with luxuriant subtropical vegetation. In the second court is an enormous stone cistern of

overflowing water, in which goldfish wander round the roots of papyrus and other aquatic plants. Built into the walls are sundry doorways and windows, exquisite examples of Sicilian architecture, that hardly seem transplanted. Ranged round are sculpture and antiquities, including a colossal statue of Zeus found at Solunto.

The great treasure of the museum is the metopes found at Selinunte, representing the very beginning and almost the culmination of Greek sculptural art. The earlier ones are so grotesque as to look like schoolboy fooling, as, for instance, that in which Perseus is shown holding Medusa by the hair with his left hand, while his right runs a sword across her throat; the hag, with protruding eyes and tongue hanging from her gaping, wry-toothed mouth, seems rather to enjoy the operation; she has fallen on one knee and hugs to her breast the little Pegasus who is springing newborn from her blood; Athene superintends the execution, her coarse features beaming with fatuous delight.

A striking contrast to these naïve essays are the later metopes, noble specimens of Hellenic sculpture in that most fascinating phase of all art, when it is preening its wings for its highest, and alas, always short-lived flight, and combines traditional formality with the presage of the freedom that is to undo it.

Specially noticeable are the subtle truth and feeling with which the abandon of death, the arrest of muscular effort and of hope as vital force fails, is indicated. On

the other hand, Zeus seated on a rock, stretching his hand towards a female figure, his face beaming with admiration and desire, is a masterly portrayal of vitality.

Among many indifferent pictures are some of interest and one which would be a gem in any collection, a little Flemish triptych, variously attributed to Van Eyck, Dürer and Mabuse, with most internal evidence for the latter. It is a marvel of minute finish, and rich and delicate colouring. There is also a charming picture by Antonello da Messina, termed 'An Annunciation,' but certainly a most unconventional treatment of the subject. The maiden has a typical Messinese face, with which one became very familiar in work connected with the earthquake.

Throughout the museum is a rich miscellany of local gleanings. Those in the Sala Araba illustrate Saracenic art in Sicily, mainly working in the service of Christianity. The ecclesiastical plunder is rich and varied. Some of it is collected in the transplanted chapel of S. Philip Neri, an example of the tasteless magnificence of the eighteenth century, some in a neighbouring room, round the walls of which are vestments wrought with exquisite and gorgeous embroidery, and in cases in the centre, chalices, monstrances and other vessels, masterpieces of goldsmith's work. From the demolished church of the Stimmate comes some charming stucco work of Serpotta, a Palermitan artist early in the eighteenth century.

The municipality of Palermo is said to contemplate

converting the beautiful palace of Lo Steri, now divided between Customs and Law Courts, into a supplementary museum. If this be done, the city will be happy in possessing two of the most beautiful museums in the world. Lo Steri is a magnificent example of Sicilian Gothic, and nothing it may contain as a museum can well surpass in interest the hall now used for the Court of Appeal. The beams and panels of the ceiling are painted with scenes from the Bible, and the life of the period. All the figures are in the costume of the fourteenth century, and the persistence of Arab tradition in Palermitan art is seen in the enlacing decoration.

Many churches, architecturally negligible, are museums of beautiful and interesting things. In this respect none surpass S. Cita, which is rich in sculpture of the Gaginis. Behind the altar is a large tripartite high relief by Antonio, singularly effective both in work and composition. In the chapel in the north-east corner are some interesting smaller high reliefs. In the second chapel on the north, is a noble and pathetic Madonna, standing with her babe on the threshold of the lifelong Gethsemane, each with full prescience of that which is to come. There they stand in terrible loneliness, separated from all the world by their mighty secret. With a piteous look, the child averts his face towards his mother, and lays his hand pleadingly on her breast, as though the prospect were too terrible to be faced. But, though a sword is going through her own soul also, she does

not blench nor falter. It was for this she had borne him ; his hand is on that awful plough, and he shall not look back. It is Gaginis's favourite type, and with the Pietà of Michael Angelo and Raphael's Sistine Madonna, is the complete artistic expression of the profound vicariousness inherent in the lot of woman, its pathos and its glory, its tragedy and its triumph.

IV

SICULO-NORMAN ARCHITECTURE

Close to the royal palace is the singular church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti ; its five domes—plastered over outside, and daubed with rain-washed red, irresistibly suggesting a crop of giant fungus—are a striking illustration of the Saracenic building of the Norman churches in Sicily.

The ground-plan is the T shape, known as an Egyptian cross, and may be considered a series of squares, each surmounted by a dome. At the east end are three apses, of which, however, the two on either side are simply interior recesses. The windows are pointed, deeply splayed within, but showing as mere slits in the plain outer wall.

On the south side are vestiges of vanished buildings —the skew-backs of cross-vaults, and a row of column bases that are said to mark the site of a little mosque, which afterwards served the monks as a refectory.

On the north-west is a piece of wall with a couple of windows of delicate Sicilian Gothic, and farther on, by a verdure-clad mass of the old city wall, are the

cloisters, a favourite subject for brush and camera. They are of later date than the church, and the spiritless monotony of their detail shows marked decadence from the exuberant fancy wrought into the stones of Monreale, but the poverty of the human art has been redeemed by the careless and lavish artistry of nature ; through centuries of beneficent neglect, assiduous elemental forces have tenderly moulded the jejune stonework, overspread it with delicate tints, set ferns, and rock-plants in its crevices, and bowered it in blossom and greenery. Birds, so sorely beset in Sicily, have found the little sanctuary, and fill its green choirs with warbled thanksgiving ; even the adjoining church of S. Gregorio, its narrow Moresque windows barbarously built up, and its grotesque rococo tower, dilapidated and weather-worn, with mellow brick showing through its peeling plaster, chimes in with the prevailing impression of ancient and negligent quietude.

Far more historically and artistically important are the twin churches of the Martorana and S. Cataldo. The Martorana was founded by George of Antioch, Grand Admiral of the two Rogers, whose memory is perpetuated in the fine bridge which the Oreto has now left high and dry on the east of the city. An endowment deed of 1143, in Greek and Arabic, is typical of its character, for, while the original plan shows that it was raised for the Greek ritual, there is an evident Saracenic feeling throughout its workmanship. This is specially noticeable in the graceful

S. GIOVANNI DEGLI EREMITI, PALERMO

detached bell-tower ; two of the doors are exquisite specimens of Saracenic woodwork. The beautiful pavement of mosaic and marble in involved geometrical design shows the dimensions and plan of the original church, which was of the usual Eastern type—nearly a square, a porch on the west, three apses on the east, with a dome above in front of them. The decoration, too, was wholly Byzantine, and all the inscriptions are in Greek. Unfortunately, the radiant marbles and mosaics were barbarously mutilated when the church was adapted to the Roman ritual in 1433. The porch was pulled down for extension on the west, and the apse to make a choir, which, however, in spite of its baroco tastelessness, is a lovely piece of colour ; its elliptical vaulting springs from antique columns, the plunder of some older building, two of them with Cufic inscriptions, its little dome, resting on stilted arches, is encrusted with mosaic, the altar—a splendid slab of *verde antico*—and tabernacle are enriched with all manner of precious stone. No doubt it is deplorable that the Admiral's apse should have been destroyed to build it, but this is gone for ever, and the drastic civic archæology that has screened the supplanting choir with an apse-shaped hoarding is hardly to be commended.

The adjacent chapel of S. Cataldo, which was for some time used as the town post-office, has been structurally less altered, but almost wholly denuded of its decoration. There is a remarkable and beautiful capital, a bold basket-like arrangement of underwrought

and twisted coil, in which classic, Byzantine and Arab reminiscence seem to blend.

This blending is characteristic of the Norman churches in Sicily. In considering them we must disembarrass our minds of almost all that the term Norman connotes in northern architecture. In truth the Sicilian buildings of the Norman epoch form a distinct and splendid paragraph in the history of European art, which could only have appeared in this long-disputed meeting-place of races and systems. Yet the term is more than an indication of date. The Sicilian architecture of that day is a striking example of the potent Norman amalgam which had such enduring political and social effects, though, architecturally, the Norman counts for little in the buildings that owe their existence to him. The Greek is there—classical Greek as a moderating and refining influence, Christian Greek in stately structure and gorgeous ornamentation—and with this is the radiant and delicate decoration that the Arabs derived and developed from it. They are often decried as mere geometricians and colorists, without fancy and imagination, but the material beauty is so delicate and subtle, the enchantment of line and hue so magically lovely, as to suggest the 'something far more deeply interfused' of the finer moods of nature. Very notable, too, is the subordination to construction which Arab ornament tends to ignore and screen.

The original and derived art are reblent in Sicily, each finding in the other its complement and completion. The aim of the Saracen had been purely æsthetic,

that of the Christian had been mainly didactic ; the one sought only to please, the other had a gospel to preach. Now, the refined instinct for beauty in form and colour was touched with spiritual aspiration, and the divine evangel was clothed with an earthly loveliness and light, that spake not singly to sense nor spirit, but to the whole nature of man.

We cannot rightly understand the architecture unless we realize that its predominating purpose was colour decoration. We see the origin of this in the older churches, as at Ravenna. It is, in fact, characteristic of the practical temper of the primitive church ; at first, almost the sole motive of the building was to provide accommodation for the services and display the pictorial Bible.

A comparison of these earlier mosaics with those of Sicily shows a curious evolution of Christian feeling, of which the final phase was yet to come. The early church, while recording every important incident in the life of her Lord, refrained from depicting the crucifixion ; whether from the awe and mystery of it, or because some pagan reticence regarding death still lingered in her art, or because, on the other hand, she felt death to be so swallowed up in victory that the act of dying was a mere negligible incident in continuous life, we cannot say, but the scene that subsequent ages were to consider the supreme expression of the divine self-sacrifice is conspicuously absent.

The Sicilian mosaics mark a later phase of Christian feeling. The crucifixion has its due place in the

Gospel story, but it has not the special prominence which it acquired later, and which has so profoundly affected Christian thought. This is reserved for the Omnipotent Lord, Ο ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ, depicted in colossal proportions in the apse, and dominating the whole church.

This noble conception of the Saviour is best studied at Cefalù, where it is said to have been the work of the Calogeri of Athos, who claimed to have preserved in their workshops the likeness of Jesus, handed on in an unbroken series of copies. The face, which is of Semitic type, is usually described as that of an ascetic, and this, in mere drawing, it is; just the conception, in fact, that we might expect from the hermit-monks. But it is something more, something that we cannot imagine its entering the mind of monk to conceive. This is an ascetic who has emerged from solitude, from fasting in the wilderness, from wrestling with the powers of evil, a ruler of men. The worn features are informed with a compelling mastery, the haggard eyes are lit with a large and comprehending insight. To the grave and tender gaze that falls on us from the apse at Cefalù, we feel that all hearts are open, and all wills should be subdued.

Is it asking too much of our modern critical spirit to accept the claim of the hermit craftsmen? Is it inconceivable that, through all the changes inevitably brought about by human repetition, something unique and unescapable may to the end have haunted their traditional conception?

A Varied Folk

A visit to Cefalù is one of the most interesting excursions to be made from Palermo, and would be one of the pleasantest, if the inhabitants, or at least such of them as a casual visitor comes in contact with, were not among the most unprepossessing and vexatious in Sicily. I suppose there are few countries of the same area in which one can have so varied an acquaintance with men and manners as in Sicily, in spite of certain distinct traits common to the whole population. It is difficult to believe that the kindly, courteous, self-respecting folk that entertain you in one part, are of the same blood as the greedy, shameless rabble that beset you in another. Yet, I dare say that could we trace the difference to its source, we should find that 'tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner,' and that it was due to happy or sinister circumstances acting on temperaments potentially the same.

When we consider his mixed ancestry, we may expect the Sicilian of to-day to have what Herbert Spencer calls a chaotic constitution. A whole repertory of possible individuals lurk in embryo within him, and it depends on the history and circumstances of one or another locality which of them shall boss the show. Then, too, his dramatic sense, and his impressionability, his readiness to take the mould of environment and occasion, make him play to perfection any rôle that circumstances may cast for him, whether it be *noblesse oblige* or the superfluity of naughtiness.

The view as you issue from the station of Cefalù is one of the most striking in Sicily. In front rises the great ruin-strewn rock, its huge bulk seeming hewn out of a single stone rather than built up of the corpses of lowly sea-things, whose remains are manifest on inspection. Below it, the present city slopes gleaming to the sea. The cathedral towers above the houses on the upper part of the slope, the yellow stones of which it is built glowing in golden relief against the hoary cliffs behind. The sketches show the principal features of the exterior. The tawny stone is ornamented with lava in rebate and relief, and great dignity is given to the higher parts by a deep cornice of interlacing arches with chevron mouldings ; this is continued round the piers that strengthen the walls at the spring of the transept-vaulting, but is interrupted at the main apse, which is the full height of the choir, and has tall, slender, attached, coupled columns, with foliaged capitals, and projecting abaci, from which spring small twin arches that fall to corbels in the centre. The great western doorway is very notable, Lombard - Romanesque with Greek detail.

The interior has been sadly mishandled, but its noble proportions still give it a tragic dignity. In the lofty half-dome of the central apse is the great mosaic. The colossal form is clad in a purple tunic shot with gold, over which a blue mantle falls in many folds ; in the left hand a book is opened, the right is raised in benediction ; the face, strong and tender, sad

with supreme insight, seems to hold all below in comprehending gaze,

> Factus homo factor hominis factique redemptor
> Judico corporeus corpora corda deus,

the inscription makes him say. Cherubim on either side veil face and feet; lower down are angels and the Blessed Mother in adoration, and below them the twelve Apostles; in the vault of the tribune soar the host of heaven; on the walls are prophets, and beneath them two companies of saints, all in the grand, severe style of Christian Greek art; the columns of the choir and the corbels that support the vaulting-shafts are covered with mosaic; the golden background is edged with deep bordering of exquisite design and colour. One is lost in wonder at the besotted taste that pulled down similar work to make place for nondescript inanities. A great loss has been the series of royal portraits in mosaic—Roger, the founder, the two Williams, Constance, and Frederick.

Adjoining is the neglected wreck of the beautiful cloisters of the Augustinian monastery that Roger attached to the church. The arches are pointed and spring from coupled columns of white marble, which were doubled at the angles; the capitals, no two of which are alike, are delicately cut; a few have Scriptural subjects, others are classical, symbolical or grotesque. One is a miniature example of the beautiful basket-like coil noticed in S. Cataldo.

The great mountain of rock behind the town is

strewn with relics of building of many races and every age. We approach it by the steep, immemorial way up which Sikel, Phœnician, Greek, Roman, Saracen and Norman have wended ; each has lavished all the art of defence that he knew on this one open joint in the great stronghold's harness of precipice. The pointed gateway of an outer wall still remains ; beyond it are two fortified medieval courts, with cisterns embedded in the rock. The crystalline, grey limestone is locally known as *lumachella*, from the snail-like fossils of which it is composed ; the great font in the cathedral is an example of its more ornamental use ; on the hill it has furnished building material to every race that Sicily has known.

The oldest structure, that goes by the entirely unwarranted name of the Temple of Diana, is perhaps the most ancient house in Europe. 'A building,' says Freeman, 'yet stands on the slope of the hill in whose walls we see work of the primeval Sikel, the piling of the vast irregular stones, to which those who love to burn their fingers with doubtful theories rejoice to give the name Pelasgian. We see, too, the work of the Sikel brought under Hellenic influences, his more regular masonry, and the cut stones of his doorways.'

It is almost fifty feet in length ; the lower courses, both of its main walls and of passages within, are of polygonal stones carefully fitted together ; they were laid without cement, and have remained where they were placed for incomputable years, yet the munici-

NORTH-EAST VIEW OF THE CATHEDRAL,
CEFALÙ

pality of Cefalù, which is allowing so much that is precious to decay or be destroyed, has thought fit to stuff every interstice, and daub all the joints, with glaring white mortar. Above this ancient masonry are courses of large rectangular stones, and two doorways of Greek character; within is brickwork that seems Roman. On the top of all is later but very ancient building, which appears from its apsidal termination to have been a Christian church.

The battlemented wall that goes round the whole circuit of the hill at the edge of the precipice encloses the graveyard of a score of cities. On the highest point are the picturesque remains of a Moresque medieval castle, from which one surveys a confused medley of ruin—walls, steps, terraces, foundations, cisterns, in every stage of dilapidation. There are beautiful views from all parts of this magnificent rock, and, although the visitor may consider that the prospect and man afford the same local contrast that Bishop Heber's missionary hymn notes in Ceylon, I cannot but think that an enterprising hotel-keeper may some day square the native rascality and rapacity, and make Cefalù a place of resort. He could offer delightful air and unlimited sunshine on the hill, boating in the bay, an inexhaustible field for pottering among the ruins and in the town, and numerous interesting and pleasant excursions in the neighbourhood. His may be the ingenuous art which 'emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros,' a task in which the consummate art in the cathedral has conspicuously failed.

Of somewhat later date, less artistically and archæologically notable, but, from having been less altered, far more generally impressive, is the cathedral of Monreale, about half an hour from Palermo by electric tram.

We leave the city by the Porta Nuova, a pleasing Renascence structure, said to have been designed by Michael Angelo. The few small rooms, with an arcaded balcony above the gateway, entered from the Royal Palace, are memorable as those chosen for himself by Garibaldi when, after the capitulation of the Neapolitan troops, he was for a time dictator of Sicily, 'the most modest apartment,' says Trevelyan, 'to be found in the palace.' About half a mile from the gate, we pass what is left of the old Norman palace of la Cuba, immured in a barrack-yard; of its groves, lakelets and kiosks, nothing remains but an exquisite little pavilion, known as la Cubola, on the opposite side of the road, where it is appropriately ensconced in an orange garden. The ancient character of the locality is not unworthily continued in the Government Giardino d'Acclimazione and in the experimental station established by the late Count Tasca and continued by his son, while in the beautiful grounds that surround the villa of this enthusiastic and public-spirited farmer and gardener has been collected from the ends of the earth a varied and luxuriant flora such as Saracenic or Norman Sybarites could only have imagined in their dreams.

At the little village of la Rocca we commence the

IN THE CATHEDRAL OF MONREALE

ascent of the royal hill; the tramway in a straight, steep slope amid crowded orange and lemon trees, the road in long windings. Behind, as we ascend what Goethe extols as a glorious road, we survey Palermo and its straggling suburbs, twinkling in sunlit dust between the sea and the dark luxuriance of the Conca d' Oro; in front, we look up to the steeply ranged houses and towers of Monreale, magnificently perched on a bold spur that projects from the amphitheatre of hills which encircle Palermo landwards, its hoary cliffs, draped with greenery, merging indistinguishably into the old battlemented walls. It looks like a fastness, in which the Middle Ages are grimly holding their ground against the oblique assaults in leisurely gradients of the highroad, and the straight, swift thrust of the tram.

Very shocking is the interior squalor of this little town that shows so bravely on approach; its dilapidated houses and dirty, rubbish-strewn streets contrast strangely with the splendid fane that attracts the stranger to it. In the midst of the slums a collegiate church raises on its outer eastern wall a representation of the Crucifixion in glazed tiles, which is a lovely bit of colour: behind the Cross is a blue veil with golden fringe, on either side garlands of fruit, flowers, and foliage, in the predella the hills stand about Jerusalem as they stand about Monreale, and the inscription seems to associate the two cities, defended for their kings' and their temples' sake.

It is satisfactory to gather that the place is not such a pauper-warren as it appears. The men one sees are of

a sturdy, independent type, and the ragged, dirty women and children do not appear unhealthy or ill-nourished. Living most of their home life in the street, and in a climate that for great part of the year makes clothing a mere irksome concession to propriety, their standard of comfort and notions of enjoyment are naturally different from those of the same class with us. Such of their financial margin as is not put by—and the savings banks show increasing deposits—they prefer spending in festivities and fireworks, rather than in furniture and finery.

The eastern walls of the cathedral are elaborately ornamented on the exterior with architectural designs in lava, similar to those at Cefalù, but already showing the purposeless redundance of decadent taste. To recall the imposing portal of an Anglo-Norman church as you stand before the beautiful Siculo-Norman doorway on the west, is to have two parables in stone of the respective styles. The bronze doors by 'Bonannus Civis Pisanus,' and those on the south by Barisano of Trani, are notable specimens of metal work, singularly different in character.

The first impression on entering is that of a vast ethereal temple, serene and radiant, whose walls seem less masonry than an interweaving of light and colour, and whose very atmosphere is charged with a splendour of harmonious hues. The dominating feature of the church, to which all its decoration appears subordinate, and tending as by a movement of music, is the colossal representation of Christ in the lofty apse. Below is

the Virgin, enthroned instead of standing in adoration as at Cefalù, marking the evolution of Christian sentiment regarding her.

The seventy or eighty thousand square feet of mosaic are described by Ferguson as 'a decoration unrivalled in its class by anything the Middle Ages have produced.' 'These,' he says, 'alone entitle it to rank among the finest medieval churches. The church at Assisi is neither so rich nor so splendid. The Certosa is infamous in taste as compared with this Sicilian cathedral.' Apart from the general decorative effect of the mosaics, they are replete with beauty and interest. There is a curious mingling of naïve realism and symbolism, especially in the earlier subjects, as in the moving of the creative spirit on the face of the waters, the breathing into Adam's nostrils of the breath of life, the birth of Eve, the final rest of the tired Creator, satisfied that his work is very good. Throughout are little local touches ; for instance, the thicket on Mount Moriah, in which the opportune ram is entangled, is an agave such as abound on the stony hills around. Though the general execution is in the stiff conventional style of Byzantine art, many of the figures have much life, as the luckless Esau stepping lithely downhill, while Jacob cringes before his father, offering the fictitious venison with disguised hands ; or again, Jacob, in nobler guise, wrestling with the angel, which concludes the scenes from the Old Testament. In the New Testament scenes Jesus is of more virile and vigorous type than is

usual in later pictures. A notable mosaic above the royal seat at the south side of the entrance to the choir represents him enthroned beneath hovering angels, placing the crown of Sicily on the head of William I., founder of the cathedral, who stands before him clad in a dalmatic. A similar coronation of Roger, the first king, more naïve and devotional in treatment, is represented in the Martorana. They are the graphic assertion of divine right by the Norman Sovereigns of Sicily, disclaiming fealty to any earthly overlord, be he Pope or Emperor. Above the opposite archiepiscopal seat, which, like that of the king, is of inlaid marble, is a mosaic representing William offering his cathedral to the Virgin.

Below the mosaics the walls are wainscoted to the height of about twenty feet with slabs of cippolino, inlaid with a frieze and bands of mosaic, exquisite in design and colour; the beautiful grey veining on white ground peculiar to cippolino gives the whole a look of silken hangings shaken by the wind; this is especially noticeable in the fine panels behind the altar, which seem stirred as by a Pentecostal gust. The pervading colour decoration is maintained in the painting and gilding of the gabled wooden roof, its tie-beams and the pendentives they rest on, in the porphyry colonnettes of the angles, and the bold flowing designs in inlaid marble on the vast floor. The nave is divided from the aisles by seventeen monolithic columns of oriental granite and one of cippolino, from which spring pointed and stilted arches. The composite capitals are singu-

THE CLOISTERS, MONREALE

larly delicate and beautiful, especially the cornucopias and the female heads on alternate columns.

Despite the proverbial ungraciousness of comparisons, we inevitably compare William's cathedral with Roger's chapel. Similar though they be in style and craftsmanship, the impressions they leave are wholly different, and each appears to gain by contrast. The cathedral is a radiant kingdom of light : the chapel seems the haunt of luminous shadow and deep-toned hovering hues, mysterious as a tinted sea-cave, lit through refracting water.

One is glad to believe that this richly arrayed church has an intimate part in the life of the meanly housed population beside it. Sladen mentions that 'almost any Sunday you may see a large congregation of them in the cathedral without any priest, praying individually till the spirit moves one of them to conduct a sort of service.' All the regular services that I have seen were crowded, and I was once present at a great 'Cresima,' when the whole population of the neighbourhood seemed gathered together. Ranged in two long lines on either side of the nave were little groups of parents and sponsors, each with a small, wondering individual, who, with ancient rites, was to be enrolled under Christ's banner for the battle of life. The Archbishop went slowly down the northern and up the southern rank, adjuring each little recruit by name, and signing him with the sign of the cross. The low winter sun, streaming through the southern windows, kindled into flame the golden walls above, where shone the

glorified forms of those whose warfare was accomplished. And over that great cloud of witnesses, and above the flooding light, the Lord, as in Isaiah's vision, was seen, high and lifted up, and his presence filled the temple.

Only second in attraction to the cathedral are the adjoining Benedictine cloisters. The arcade is of slightly pointed and stilted arches, resting on coupled columns of white marble, doubled at the angles, with richly carved capitals. The roof is a plain tunnel vault, quite independent of the arches, which gives to northern eyes an incoherent air to the architecture. The arches are of tufa, enriched by a flat two-membered arch of encrusted lava above. A heavy, rounded inner moulding with socket, which does not rest on the present abaci, seems to show that originally there were columns and capitals, probably of tufa, more massive than the present marble ones, which appear slight for the bulk above them. This, and the contrast between their high finish and the broader work of the arcade, gives a certain look of incongruity and weakness, which is accentuated by the greater weathering of the tufa than of the hard marble. The capitals are of almost infinite variety, profusely wrought with a technique superior to any similar work of the day ; Biblical, legendary, monastic and domestic scenes appear between the columns of tiny edifices, or among animals, flowers, fruit, and a wealth of scroll and foliage decoration. On the ninth column of the north colonnade is William the Good offering a model of the cathedral to the Madonna, enthroned with

THE MARTORANA, PALERMO

her Child on the twin column ; an angel with outspread wings between the capitals supports the miniature edifice. Some of the columns are encrusted with mosaic in vertical or spiral bands ; others are exquisitely arabesqued or covered with chevron in relief ; there is often unexpected carving about the pedestals. A delightful feature is the fountain courtlet in the south-west angle, shown in a sketch ; arcades of three arches form with those of the corner a little quadrangle ; marble steps on the four sides descend as though to a bath. In the centre a mosaicked column rises through a broad marble basin, and terminates in a sphere round which are grotesque heads, from whose mouths water pours into the basin below.

It is a thousand pities that the tufa has been daubed with ochre wash, and the arcades roofed with garish red tiles. This last is the more regrettable, since the delicious green, yellow and orange of the huge tiles on the cathedral give an object-lesson of what tiles may be. It is worth while mounting to the roof to see these, and to enjoy the view. There is also a delightful view from the pleasant terrace of the old monastery, the dormitory of which, with a row of fine lancet windows bordered with lava inlay, is seen on the north from the cloisters. In the vestibule a fresco by Giuseppe Valasquez records the legend of the great foundation : William rested under a carob-tree while hunting and fell asleep ; the Virgin told him in a dream that a great treasure lay buried beneath the spot ; he woke and, digging down where he had lain, found it among the roots of the tree ;

he gathered the most famous craftsmen of the day and bade them raise to his divine benefactress the fairest church that wealth and skill could build. How well they did his bidding may be seen to this day.

The pointed arch appears in these Siculo-Norman churches like something born before due time ; but, in truth, its resemblance to those evolved a little later in France is merely fortuitous. It supports nothing but the wall above it, and its point has no structural significance ; a round arch would have done the work as well. The builders, when they substituted for it these graceful forms, were thinking of nothing but appearance, and perhaps of the additional height given by both point and stilt to the span between the short antique pillars that they so largely utilized. The two pointed arches, so like, yet subtly distinguishable, so different in genesis and sequence, are typical of the styles in which they occur. The Saracenic expresses serenity, the Gothic aspiration ; the one was deliberately decorative, the other, an accident of construction, that, once it had occurred, was seized on and elaborated as the architectural expression of the 'divine discontent' of the builders' spirit. 'They dreamt not of a perishable home,' who raised our clustered columns, that pass into capitals which hardly interrupt the ascending movement, and then, branching out and soaring up, meet in umbrageous vaulting that seems the awed expression of eternal solemnity. But there is neither discontent nor dream in the noble self-sufficiency of the classic, or in the serene satisfaction of the Saracenic, arch. We cannot

compare the three, though we may contrast, if we please, the different spirit and aim that they connote. Each is the separate expression of a temperament, a conception of life, which the world would be poorer for being without.

Another comparison is suggested by these mosaicked churches. Gothic, in its later phases, was also tending to make colour decoration the controlling feature of the architecture, vast windows of stained glass filling nearly the whole wall-space. No one who has stood within the splendour of those fragile walls, which seem rather luminous than translucent, flooding all interior space and surface with brooding colour, will place them second to any buildings in the world. But they would be out of the question in regions where the earth is so restless as in Sicily, and even in our own stable land many a ghastly blank or crude renovation testify how precarious is their glory, whereas mosaics, unscathed and undimmed, still tell their sacred story on walls dating from the earliest days of Christian building.

But in this, as in many other respects, architecture seems not to have had her perfect work. One cannot but ask as one sees the sickly glass through which the sun streams in on the mosaics of Monreale, its glare only tempered by dust, or by a few casual panes of garish colour, why the two methods should not be combined. The vast sheets of trembling colour that illuminate our northern cathedrals would long ago have been shattered in Sicily, but these small openings—all the brilliant southern sunlight needs—in lieu of being

jarring interruptions, might have been the harmonious completion, of the gorgeous scheme of decoration.

A striking contrast to these noble buildings is the debased Renascence, of which Sicily is full. I suppose that the Renascence at its best is, in its way and within its limits, the most perfect architecture that human art has evolved since the Greek temples. There is no style so purely intellectual, so consciously the achievement of its intention, and so complacently exclusive of all beyond its purview—aspiration and awe, the inspiring paradoxes, the transcending gleams and brooding shadows, of religion. This, perhaps, is one reason why it has been the chosen style of the church whose strength and whose weakness it is that she denies nothing to human intellect. To explain the incomprehensible and define the infinite, is the foible of all the churches, but Rome outdoes every other in the magnificent confidence with which she plants unfaltering feet where prophets and apostles have feared to tread, and turns her relentless lantern on the twilight of the gods.

Of this serene and sedate Renascence there is not much in Sicily. Baroco and Rococo run riot in Palermo. Perhaps the most grotesque monument of painstaking and costly tastelessness is Sta. Catarina, that seems set as a foil to the two beautiful, but disfigured, Siculo-Norman Churches of S. Cataldo and the Martorana that face it. The most pleasing example of the style is S. Salvatore, whose lofty, weatherworn façade rises in the Corso. The interior has a sugges-

tion of serious motive underlying its fantastic frivolities. Time has mellowed its crudities, and laid kindly dust on its plump cherubs and bare-limbed angels, and now, in the harmonious blending of many hues, in the restful disposition of light and shade, in the gracious curve of its elliptical dome, it has something of that 'attribute of the eternal,' which Wren laid down as an essential in building, and which his genius contrived to impart even to the mundane style to which unkind fashion bound him.

V

SICULO-NORMAN PSYCHOLOGY

Another legacy of the great Norman epoch is seen in the standards and ideals, the manner and bearing, of the population. These alien rulers, in whose stately Court the romantic literature of Southern Europe was born, touched the Sicilian imagination to some of its most permanent characteristics, and have been adopted in the people's thought as the most honoured of their ancestors. Still, in the marionette theatres of Palermo, the audience applaud vociferously the exploits of the Norman knight, and hiss the Saracens whom he slaughters, though nearly every face bears witness that Saracen is to Norman in their blood as a thousand to one. The dust of Sikel, Greek, Saracen, and a hundred forgotten races, went to make the anthropic basis of the population, and the Normans grasped and moulded into one the ill-compacted material, and breathed into it a spirit that informs it to this day. To the historian the Sicilian assumption of Norman descent may seem ludicrously groundless ; he may smile, as he does when he sees some blond, brawny

North Briton—speaking broad, archaic English, and calling himself by some uncompromisingly English name—masquerading in the garb, and flaunting the mottoes, of those whom his forbears dreaded and despised in turn, and slaughtered when they could like vermin. Yet, in the one case as in the other, the soul can make good her title-deeds, and humanity is the gainer by every such adoption, is richer for that the haunting witchery of the Celt captivated his stolid conquerors, and the chivalrous temper of the Norman englamoured his motley Sicilian subjects.

It is only under those great rulers that, during the present era, Sicily has been a power that counted in the world, and to count in the world, whether through his country in the great drama of the nations, or personally on his little local stage, is the darling ambition of the Sicilian's heart, the ground of his fantastic *omertá*. As he looks back to that golden age, the sad and sordid facts of later history drop away, and he sees only the radiant gleams and doughty deeds that brightened it. Most peoples have some thread of romance running through their history, but of Sicily's part in history, as seen by the Sicilian, romance is the whole warp and woof. Psychologically he is still in the Middle Ages. He may have to bend himself to the beggarly necessities and regimentations of modern life ; these must be negotiated, exploited, evaded, as best may be, but in heart and outlook his ideal is ever Roger and his unblenching knights charging the serried Saracen ranks, Roland and Oliver fighting through the long day amid

the echoing rocks of Roncesvalles, and falling at last behind the heaps that they had slain, Bayard bearing his dinted shield, without fear and without reproach, over a hundred hard-fought fields, Garibaldi and his handful of volunteers flinging themselves at the Bourbon battalions—these are his notion of what men should be, and what, so far as crabbed fate and cramping circumstance allow, he purports to be himself. His patched and ragged dress and squalid environment are singularly unromantic ; he himself by no means lives up to his high ideal ; yet in the bottom of his mind, the ancestral conceptions persist ; he ever reverts from the sordid or servile slough into which need or greed has drawn him to the medieval outlook upon life, and this gives to his bearing a *prestance*, independence, and courtliness, which often, when sophisticated with a little education, runs into amusing swagger; but an appeal to the chivalrous ideal is never without response.

In dusty squares and on sunny seaside quays *cantastorie* recount to attentive groups the romances of the paladins and knights of old. Their adventures are represented by marionettes in crowded little theatres in the slums of the cities, and are depicted in startling detail on the common carts. To stand at the side of a suburban road and watch a string of carts going to market, is to see pass muster before you half the heroes of chivalry.

These carts are one of the most characteristic features of the country. The groundwork is nearly always yellow, and every square inch—sides, wheels, axle-tree,

CEFALÙ : SUNSET

even the under-carriage, which can only be seen when the shafts are tilted up for unloading—is covered with gaily painted scenes and decorations. Artistic merit is conspicuously absent, but in this lavish ornamentation is poured out the soul of the people. The subjects are usually hereditary in families. When a cart wears out, the same scenes are reproduced on its successor. Thus, every family is a specialist in some little plot of history or romance, and a factor in the general education of the streets and highways. The history of mankind from Adam and Eve to Garibaldi, including a good deal not to be found in the textbooks, might be reconstructed from these gaudy vehicles, and would lose nothing in the telling. It is history highly coloured, boldly, not to say audaciously, drawn ; for it is especially its dramatic and romantic side—all that thrills the feelings, and fires the fancy, and curdles the blood—that appeals to the artist in carts, and the homely public for whom he caters. Blood flows freely, steel glitters, and maidens swoon. All literature is laid under contribution, not only the medieval ballads and romances, but the Iliad, Odyssey and Æneid, the beautiful Bible-story and the quaint legends of the saints. Some equipages are like ambulatory Sunday schools, covered with scenes from Scripture and hagiology, even to the blinkers, where saints lift up holy hands to turn away the eyes of horse and mule lest they behold vanity. Modern history, in its more eventful phases, finds a place. Garibaldi and his red-shirted followers afford a fine field for the paint-pot, and the assassination of Umberto II.

is portrayed with realistic horror. I believe the assassination of Lincoln, whose lofty simplicity and tragic end deeply impressed the Sicilian imagination, is also sometimes seen, as well as other events in American history. I am indebted to Paton's 'Picturesque Sicily,' for the statement that a favourite series for the four panels of a cart was: Columbus at the Court of Queen Isabella, Isabella giving her crown jewels to Columbus, Columbus sighting the New World, and—I almost tremble as I write the words, and feel that, could they reach the shade of President Monroe, they would bring him back in stormy protest to the world, over half of which his name looms as an ægis—Columbus crowned King of America. The horse, mule or ass is decked in a manner worthy of the vehicle; all about him wave, dangle, and glitter feathers, bells, balls, scraps of looking-glass, rosettes, ribbons, medals. Nothing is more comical than to see a tiny donkey bedizened from nose to tail with plumes and miscellaneous gewgaws, which flutter and jangle at every movement.

The Sicilian is stigmatized as illiterate, and it must be admitted that statistics show an impressive percentage of *analfabetici* in the population, but it by no means follows that his intellect is blank and idle; an always circulating library is about his path, and does more to furnish his mind than could many books and lectures. When all the towns and villages of the United Kingdom are supplied with libraries, I would recommend the painting of carts to millionaires in search of a vocation.

As the Sicilian jolts in his lumbering cart along his dusty roads, or threads his way through the narrow streets of his malodorous slums, as he chaffers over the uninviting wares of his market-place—which in the poorer quarters often seems a dumping-ground of scraps and rags, fragments of lean and bony beasts, and heaps of gruesome fish—he has ever before his eyes the great deeds and scenes of the past ; his spirit can always turn from the squalid surroundings and sordid occupations of to-day, and equip itself from 'the armoury of the invincible knights of old.'

The little marionette theatres are another manifestation of the pervading psychology. It is astonishing how much dramatic effect can be produced by these jointed mannikins, some three feet high, suspended and worked by five strings attached to head, arms and legs. A knight advances, clad in shining mail and overshadowed by a vast and nodding plume. In solemn and measured tones, a voice from the unseen, that tells the tale throughout the whole performance, introduces him, and describes the circumstances. The glittering puppet, the while, struts and swaggers, nods his plume, draws and brandishes and sheathes again his sword. There comes a troop of Saracens, introduced by the mysterious voice with every opprobrious epithet. But soon even these stentorian tones are drowned in the din of battle and the martial music of the orchestra—an enthusiastic and wholly sufficient band of one, seated on the front bench. The ill-favoured, turbaned mob fling themselves on the valorous puppet. Then is seen what

a stout heart beats beneath that tin breastplate. He backs, advances, lunges, he thrusts and slashes. At every movement some infidel falls to the ground with a sickening thud. The *deus ex machina* puts forth a shirt-sleeved arm, and drags the corpses away ; fresh hordes, singularly like their slaughtered predecessors, rush upon the scene, and beset the unblenching knight. The spectators shudder at the resounding bang, made from behind or below, with which they meet in shock of battle ; the music becomes fast and furious. At length the undaunted warrior is left alone and victorious on the hard-fought planks, and the presiding voice, once more getting a hearing, sonorously proclaims his triumph.

The text of the old romances is strictly adhered to. It is very remarkable how thoroughly conversant the audience—mostly unwashed and unkempt fellows in their working clothes — are with these romances. Any casual spectator beside whom the uneducated foreigner may be sitting, can tell him the names, relationship, and antecedents of any person on the stage. Very charming is the simple and unaffected courtesy shown to strangers who may find themselves in the homely throng. Anyone will stand up to give them a place on the narrow, close-ranged benches, and there is an unobtrusive anxiety that they shall see and understand the representation. Should there be ladies among the visitors, the solicitude on their behalf knows no bounds, even to the suppression of smoking, from which ordinarily the air is dense ; the absence of native

women is a noticeable illustration of the semi-oriental seclusion in which they are kept.

Like the painters of carts, the marionette impresario has a wide outlook that takes all history for its province, with a keen eye for the dramatic element in it. On May 11, the day that Garibaldi landed at Marsala, the romance of chivalry is replaced by the modern Sicilian epos of 'I Mille'; and on the anniversary of the day that the brigand Musolino was arrested, his career is represented to a sympathetic audience; while a more ambitious departure is made on the great Christian festivals, at Christmas the idyll of the Nativity, and in Passion week the great Gospel tragedy. To an Englishman the rude and halting portrayal of the most solemn of recorded scenes cannot be otherwise than distasteful. He has to remember that he is among a people who are still in the stage that learns best by the eye, whom King Roger's mosaics instruct more effectively than the Bible Society; in spite of the three R's, of steam, electricity, and daily papers, they can take dolls seriously, and instinctively supply to the crude representation the emotional and imaginative correspondence that we give to the written word. They seem to have no sense of incongruity or irreverence—no more than we should have in reading a badly printed or ill-bound Bible—as they watch the personification of the most sacred form that has trod the earth, strutting and bobbing, and jerking head and limbs, the dangling angel in tin breastplate and spangled skirts administering consolation, Judas

Iscariot—his depravity made known to all men by his dwarfish stature and a complexion like mud—indulging in unseemly antics whenever his Master's back is turned, shying the lettuce that represents the paschal repast on the floor, and at length claimed by Satan on the gallows-tree and carried off to his own place, which opens with a spurt of flame upon the stage. A millennium of spiritual evolution separates the population that can sit for hours, smoking and munching, as they watch these ungainly puppets, from the simple and serious mountaineers who throw their whole soul and the inherited reverence and aptitudes of generations into the Passion Play of Ober-Ammergau.

Rooted in the same medieval conception of life is what is known as the Mafia, and it is singular that its most virulent manifestations should be in the happily conditioned region round Palermo, where land is minutely subdivided among the mass of the population, and well-being is more widely diffused than in almost any part of the island, while in the much less prosperous province of Syracuse the Mafia is unknown.

What the Mafia exactly is may be somewhat difficult to say. The cast of thought that it predicates is almost universal, but its manifestations vary with locality and circumstance. The adroit questioner can get almost any definition of it he likes, and very little maladroitness will reduce the conversation to polite evasion. The term in its widest use indicates, not an organization but a temper of mind, a conception of life, of which the core is a sense of personal dignity. This irreprehensible

sentiment easily runs into an overweening self-sufficiency, and this, again, readily lends itself to exploitation by sinister and criminal combinations. No doubt the cause lies among the old, unhappy, far-off things of which the island history is full ; it is part of the mortmain of the past that weighs so heavily on all Sicilian life. One may say that since Conradin, grandson of the great Frederick, died on the scaffold in 1268, till Garibaldi landed at Marsala in 1860, Sicily has been ruled by outsiders, and ruled abominably. Government and authority have come to be looked on as something alien and hateful ; law and administration have been instruments of oppression and extortion ; there has been woven into every fibre of the popular mind a distrust of everything official, a determination that by every device, compatible with keeping a whole skin, the law shall be frustrated, circumvented, paralysed. This sentiment is much too deep-seated to be eradicated in a day. 'The negation of God' had lasted too long for the spirit it had generated to be exorcized by the best of governments, and, if not only Sicilian but Italian criticism is to be believed, the administration of Sicily is by no means an example of wisdom and light, and in nothing less so than in the inelastic uniformity which takes no account of regional variability. Italy, in Lombroso's epigrammatic phrase, is united but not unified, and there is no morsel that the heterogeneous kingdom has less assimilated than Sicily, where, side by side with the cult of Garibaldi, is the feeling that the

government of Rome is as alien as that of Naples, which it superseded, and even more unsympathetic to, and ignorant of, insular opinions and interests. So the old disastrous state of things persists, which endeavours to make the life of the people, as far as possible, independent of official administration. In the country parts, at any rate, all classes are touched with the feeling, and readily fall in with any combination that exploits it. Whatever may be their differences among themselves, *vis-à-vis* of the law, they hold all together and keep themselves close. Political machinery is captured, and the most up-to-date procedure utilized, in the interests of the ideas of the Middle Ages ; occasion is afforded for multifarious evil-doing, which every class in turn suffers from, and all combine to screen. No cruelty or treachery is shrunk from in maintaining the ascendancy of an unseen and unscrupulous authority. The reaction against government results in a more stringent and intimate tyranny than the most despotic government could enforce, and when the limits of legality are openly overstepped, it is with the picturesque criminality that appeals so strongly to the Sicilian heart. Epics have evolved round the exploits of sordid and ferocious brigands. 'Chiagne Palermo Messina si lagna,' was the burden of a popular song that welled up from the soul of the people, overflowing with compassion at the arrest of a widespread association of criminal Mafiosi.

Legal evidence of crimes of violence is almost unobtainable ; the dying man will embrace his murderer

STREET IN CEFALÙ

if he see an agent of the law approaching ; his relatives will perjure themselves sooner than say a word that will bring the culprit to justice, though to avenge the crime is the dearest desire of their hearts, and will be made the preoccupation of their lives. The vernacular literature abounds in illustrations of this conspiracy of silence before the law. Pitré, in his 'Popular Traditions,' gives a strange legend of Cefalù. A young man was in prison on a charge of manslaughter. His mother, believing him to be innocent, had recourse to a friar, who went with her to the grave of the victim, had the stone removed, and adjured the corpse to reveal the name of the assassin. The dead man knew that the accused was his murderer, but the popular code of honour sealed his lips, even in the tomb.

'Patri, no,' cci arrispunniu,
'Stu giuvini è 'nfamatu attortamenti ;
'Cu fu chi m'ammazzau, lu sapi Diu ;
'Nun mi spïati, ca nun sacciu nenti.'

['No, father,' he answered, 'this youth is unjustly accused. God knows who killed me. Do not question me. I know nothing.']

At its best the Mafia is a crazy chivalry, a topsy-turvy code of honour ; but the temper on which it rests easily becomes the opportunity for, and the protection of, all manner of wickedness, a cloak for extortion, a stalking-horse for personal revenge, ambition, aggrandizement, an instrument of abominable injustice and cruelty.

I was at Palermo in March, 1909, when Lieutenant

Giuseppe Petrosino, of the New York Police, who had distinguished himself in his adopted country by the determination with which he had tracked and brought to justice the agents of the 'Black Hand,' was shot as he crossed the Giardino Garibaldi in the evening to enter his hotel. Many persons were in the square at the time, but no evidence as to the murderers was obtainable. He was understood to have come to Sicily to trace ramifications of the infamous organization, and the authorities had been anxious about his safety, but with characteristic courage he had refused the protection pressed upon him.

He was accorded a public funeral. The coffin, preceded by the craped flag of disgraced Palermo, and covered with the unavailing stars and stripes, escorted by companies of all the municipal corps, slowly wound its way, with the long-drawn wail of funeral music, through streets lined with a variously diverted crowd. All that officialdom could do by way of amend to an insulted and friendly nation was done, but there, so far as I could observe, the amend ended. Among the populace was no note of shame or indignation, no sign of any sentiment beyond the characteristic Sicilian enjoyment of a spectacle. The majority of the onlookers did not even uncover as the coffin passed. If a stranger might venture to interpret the general sentiment, it was one of respectful regret that an execution which, however deplorable, was after all judicial, should have necessitated a slight to a nation for whom Sicilians cherish peculiar regard. Palermo,

in fact, raised its eyebrows, shrugged its shoulders, and slightly inverted its distended palms, as it gazed with delicate deference and deprecation across the Atlantic.

There is never wanting a 'seed of goodness in things evil' that obtain a wide sway over men's minds. When one sees a population with such a strong sense of solidarity, in whom the obligation of what may be called collective conscience, however perverted, is so incumbent, one cannot help thinking that, if once law and government could win their confidence, if they could feel that the polity of which they formed part expressed their character, and legislation promoted their interests and effectuated their will, they might gradually become one of those model democracies in which each individual could say, not in arrogance but in responsibility, 'L'état, c'est moi,' in which every citizen considered himself trustee of the public weal, and agent of law and order.

VI

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF PALERMO

The most striking natural feature in the neighbourhood of Palermo is Monte Pellegrino. Standing seaward on the north, almost as an island, it takes the eye on first approach and dominates every prospect.

Its bare, weather-worn surface is peculiarly susceptible of atmospheric effect; dawn with gentle, hesitating touch, lays delicate tints upon it, noon robes it in golden haze, the purple shadows of the clouds loiter idly in its hollows; fleecy mists from the sea drape it in ghostly white, dank winds wrap it in a clinging shroud, storms cast their black mantle upon it; the sinking sun fires it with fugitive and flaming passion, then leaves it a shadowy phantom, looming grey and vague, or glimmering pale and spectral in the cold magic of moon and stars.

Up one of the three breaches in its precipitous sides, described by Polybios two thousand years ago, a road now mounts in easy zigzags among weather-worn, many-hued rocks, that are at first a shore-side pleistocene deposit, the abundant fossils in which are interesting

from the association of numerous species still living in the Mediterranean with others that are now found only in distant northern waters, such as the *Panopæa* of Norway, the *Cyprina* of Iceland, the *Buccinum* of Greenland. The presence of these far-travelled types is taken as one among many indications that the Straits of Gibraltar were formerly deeper than now, so that cold currents from the north, compelled by their density to creep along below the warmer and more expanded surface-water, were able to enter the Mediterranean with their freight of tiny life. Higher up we come to Triassic limestone, of which the mass of the mountain consists, but which has been overlaid at the base by these later deposits. The Marquis of Gregorio, artist, poet, and savant, whose yearly publications are furnishing such valuable material for the geology of his native isle, has found on one of the summits of Pellegrino pleistocene breccia—probably a cave-deposit—containing the remains of mammals that have their nearest kindred in Africa, with which geologists seem agreed that Sicily must have been connected much more recently than with Europe.

These stony, wind-swept tracts afford pasture to innumerable goats, which are led up every morning after going the rounds of the city retailing their milk from house to house. Between six and eight o'clock, flocks of goats, and smaller companies of little red cows, saunter through the streets of Palermo, and their milk is drawn into vessels, ranging from a wineglass to a bucket, supplied at the doors. The housewife atten-

tively looks on and sees that her measure is not unduly topped with froth ; if it be, she carefully blows it off, and returns the vessel to be filled. The intervention of the water-tap is entirely precluded.

Almost as abundant on Monte Pellegrino as the goats are the sportsmen. So far as the casual stranger can judge, the sport is of the humanest kind. Once I did meet some sportsmen bearing a carcass suspended by its legs from a pole, and I was keenly curious to see what big game the mountain had brought forth, but it proved to be only an unhappy dog that had been accidentally shot by his master.

The almost platonic devotion of the Sicilian to *la caccia* is remarkable. No country, I should say, is so carefully preserved ; every tiny enclosure of intensively cultivated land, on which one cannot imagine the most simple-minded bird seeking perch or cover, is protected by some such notice as 'La caccia e strettamente proibita.' But then what an attractive and comprehensive term is *la caccia ;* it is such a long-descended and magnificent generalization that a lack of material results is condoned in advance.

After all, what can be more admirable than these *cacciatori* of Monte Pellegrino, returning, cheerful and contented, with empty bags, or keenly pursuing their bloodless sport in the best of air, among the finest of views, and equipped in the most picturesque paraphernalia ? Some of the guns are delightful weapons, which elsewhere are only encountered in a museum. To load and discharge these formidable pieces requires

courage of a high order, that can afford to be independent of results. The capacious and dramatic bags, too, are their own sufficient *raison d'être*, apart from anything they may contain ; frequently the sportsman rides to the scene on a pony decorated with saddle-bags that an artist could not pass without sketching. Now and then a company of cowled monks pace slowly along, amid goats, guns and dogs, telling their beads ; pilgrims, singly or in groups, sometimes visionary, but oftener mundanely festive, wind up and down ; soil-stained maidens, balancing strange burdens on their heads, step lightly with bare feet down the stony slope ; one hardly knows whether one has strayed into the Middle Ages, or among a crowd of supers in a melodrama ; the slaughter of a few birds would seem a superfluously realistic detail ; it would appear time for the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to intervene and stop the show.

The views on the way up and from the summit are very lovely. On every side of the grey, weather-beaten head, stretch great shoulders of mountain ; over half the prospect below spreads the blue table of the sea, broken by misty islands ; immediately beneath us is the Conca d' Oro, a bay of dark verdure in which white-walled townlets stand enisled ; between green and blue, like a curve of light embroidery, lies Palermo.

The surrender to Rome at the end of the first Punic war of the huge natural fortress on which we stand marks one of the two main turning-points in Sicilian

history. A great man, Hamilkar Barak, was put in command of the Carthaginian fleet in 247 B.C., a year memorable for the birth of his still greater son. He occupied Herkte, and from this impregnable position, for five years cut in two and paralysed the Roman forces. The success of his bold move, however, depended on the command of the sea ; were that lost, instead of controlling the strategic position he would be caught in a trap. But a fleet means money, the Roman treasury was empty, the demands of the Government pushed to the extremest limit. The supreme crisis evoked one of those waves of patriotic purpose that are the ultimate sanction both of democracy and empire. The people themselves provided that which no government could have exacted ; the wealthier citizens supplied a trireme each ; little joint-stock companies were formed to furnish others, to be paid for by the state after the success that no one doubted. The opportune capture of a famous privateer supplied a model handier than the lubberly and ill-found craft that had been wrecked and captured between Lilybaion and Drepana, superior even, as it proved, to the redoubtable warships of Carthage. By strenuous exertions two hundred and fifty triremes were got ready to put to sea early in 242, and reached Sicily before the arrival of the supplies and reinforcements sent every spring from Carthage to the Sicilian garrisons.

At daybreak on a boisterous March morning these light and mobile ships, manned with the pick of the legions, engaged the heavily laden and hastily equipped

COAST NEAR TRAPANI AND ISLAND OF AIGOUSA, SCENE OF THE ROMAN NAVAL VICTORY, 242 B.C.

Carthaginians, sank fifty of them, captured seventy, and sent the rest in headlong flight to Carthage, with the news of a disaster that made the surrender of the two isolated Punic posts in Sicily a mere question of time. The treaty that closed the war did but formulate conditions inevitably involved in the transfer of the sovereignty of the sea. So far as Sicily was concerned there was a pause of a thousand years in the secular strife, of which, from the absorption of the Phœnician settlements by Carthage two centuries before, she had been the central scene.

The change of the mountain's name from Herkte to Pellegrino records a very different association. That which for the last four hundred years has drawn streams of pilgrims up its steep and rugged sides is the story of Sta. Rosalia, which has so profoundly impressed the imagination of the people of Palermo. A short distance below the summit, a white façade in the face of the rock marks the entrance to the cave that is hallowed as the place where her remains rested, unknown and forgotten, for five hundred years. In 1699 the Senate of Palermo assigned the mountain for the maintenance of a church, defining the grant as a reversion to Sta. Rosalia of the domain pertaining to her as maid of honour and *donataria* of Queen Margaret, mother of William the Good. There seems a happy linking of royal names across the gulf of centuries in the golden wreath placed upon the statue of the saint by another Queen Margaret, mother of the good King who now reigns over Sicily, and who, with his wife, was

foremost among those who ministered to her in her late calamity.

An arch of rock, transformed by inlaid marbles into a tasteful Renascence porch, leads into the outer court of the holy place, walled with virgin cliff, set with tufts of grass and sprays of fern, canopied far above by the blue awning of the sky. Apsed beyond this flood of daylight is the sacred cave, its dim air lit by glimmering tapers, and filled with murmurs from trickling and dripping water, which has carved, fretted and lined with stalactitic moulding the natural vaulting that hangs shadowy above. Innumerable tubes of green-hued metal catch the water that is always filtering through, and convey it to a cistern whence it is retailed as a specific against all mortal ills. Raised on a rock to the left is the altar, beneath which, behind iron bars and covered with votive jewellery, is the marble statue of the saint by Gregorio Tedeschi, that won the enthusiastic admiration of Goethe. Though I would sooner err with Goethe than be correct with many a later art critic, I cannot see it as he did. Surely this plump and comely damsel, reclining in an affected pose, is a very uninspired—shall I say a somewhat Teutonic—conception of the mystic anchorite who wore out her life in prayer and fasting amid these stony solitudes.

The slender facts of the story of Sta. Rosalia have for the last four hundred years formed the framework of an ever-growing mass of tradition, in which the marvellous often borders on the grotesque, and the quaint and childish become naïvely pathetic. What-

ever may be thought of the historic value of the nucleus-legend and its accretions, it may be safely said that no Palermitan has been the worse for believing them ; to many they may have been the one gleam of the ideal in a bare and sordid lot.

Rosalia was the daughter of Duke Sinibald, a kinsman of William II., surnamed the Good. She was singularly fair and gifted, the darling of her parents, the flower of the court, the idol of the people ; but on the threshold of the most brilliant life the world of that day could give, there came on her a mistrust of the world and the things of it, that deepened to horror and detestation. Everywhere she saw intimations of mortality and a lurid light from beyond the grave. She fled the court, but was brought back and lived, broken and desolate, in splendid captivity. Once again she escaped. The chief eunuch—there is a sinister significance in the mention of this functionary in the Norman court that perhaps goes far to explain the story of Rosalia—undertook to forfeit his head should he not find her and bring her back. He found her, but she would not come back, and, on his return alone, he was duly beheaded. In the end she was left to have her way, and in the remote fastnesses of the mountain, through heat, cold and storm, wore out her life in prayer and vigil before a rude cross that she had made of two sticks. Her grave, if she had any, was unmarked ; her name and story were almost forgotten, till in the terrible plague of 1623 the minds of the people, it were hard to say how or why, turned to the

Norman maiden who, five hundred years before, had fled from the city into the wilderness. They saw in her mystic character and great renunciation the lesson that they needed, and became possessed with the conviction that only by bringing back into their midst her neglected remains, whose resting-place she was believed to have revealed in a vision, could they be saved in their distress. The Pope demurred, the archbishop temporized, the doctors hesitated, but the people would not be denied. The real canonization of Rosalia was by the *vox populi*, which the *vox ecclesiæ* haltingly confirmed. On July 15, 1624, the hallowed relics were solemnly brought from the hillside cave and carried in procession round the city, and the plague was stayed. Now, by a strange irony, all that remains of her who fled from pomp and luxury to die upon the mountain, rests in the costliest shrine of the cathedral in a massive and richly wrought sarcophagus of silver, which on July 15, year by year, is carried round the city with every adjunct of splendid ceremonial.

Everyone acquainted with Palermo has heard of the hideous light said to have been thrown on these venerated relics by a distinguished English naturalist. What can be the good of these ghoul-like investigations, and what do their conclusions matter? The real reliquary of the saints is the mind of humanity. The fragments of crumbling bone or mouldering fabric are but *memoria technica*, token-coins of the garnered treasure that rust and moth do not corrupt. What imports it if they be not materially or historically authentic?

'In Dubiis Libertas'

It is a pleasant and interesting excursion to Piana dei Greci, one of the Greek settlements about fifteen miles from Palermo. When, in 1466, the death of George Castriota, better known by his Turkish name of Scanderbeg, ended the last heroic stand of Christianity against Islam in Eastern Europe, a number of his compatriots fled to Italy and Sicily, where they still preserve the Greek language, customs, costumes and ritual. The ritual, however, was slightly modified to effectuate union with the Western Church under the headship of the Pope, of whom the little communities are among the most loyal and affectionate children. There are probably few in which the Pascendi and the Lamentabili have caused less searching of heart. In externals, indeed, there has been little change; the impish *ι* that split Christendom in twain has disappeared from the Nicene Creed, and the twofold procession is affirmed, but the familiar accessories, the offices that had sanctified their emotions in the most solemn moments of their lives, were left to them unchanged. Rome, having secured what she considered essential to sound doctrine, surprises us with her liberality in matters of discipline. Beyond the addition of two words, and the omission of a letter, nothing unaccustomed was imposed. The little Uniat Church of S. Niccolo in Palermo is built on the traditional plan of which we see the half-obliterated traces in the Martorana and the Eremiti; no image is allowed within its walls, nor any instrumental music; clergy and laity are still separated by the iconostasis, or screen of sacred pictures

in the stiff but impressive style of Greek ecclesiastical art ; the Eucharist is administered in both kinds ; once a year, at Pentecost, the congregation kneel in prayer, but at all other times pray standing ; their bearded priests wear Greek vestments, and the parochial priests may be married men. One cannot help thinking that, had the Church of England possessed in the eighteenth century the statesmanlike comprehension displayed by Rome in the fifteenth, she might have remained the Church of the nation.

A festival should be chosen for the visit to Piana dei Greci that the rich costumes and peculiar ecclesiastical ritual may be seen, but, I believe, a wedding, in which these are at their best, can generally be arranged. The community is miserably poor ; there are always betrothed couples waiting till they can afford to get married, and the fifty lire or so subscribed by a party of foreign sightseers suffices to start them in domestic life. On these occasions there is a display of all the heirlooms in the way of female finery that poverty and the importunity of collectors have left the family—dresses, stiff with gold and silver braid ; elaborately wrought silver belts, with huge buckles, on which is usually the figure of a saint ; large earrings, much sought after as brooches and pendants by their less historic sisters of other lands.

To the east of Palermo is a block of strangely shaped hills which, with Monte Pellegrino, seem to form a giant portal to the harbour. In this direction, among miscellaneous suburban squalor, is the long, tiled roof

and little red dome of San Giovanni dei Lebbrosi, said to have been built by Robert Wiscard on the spot where he encamped against Palermo. Near this is the Norman Church of S. Spirito, the tolling of whose bell on Easter Monday, 1282, gave the signal for the tragic Vespers in which the Sicilian temperament flamed out in one of those passionate outbursts by which from time to time it has scorched its ineffective protests on the page of history. The chivalry, romance, and fiery independence of the Sicilian character, its lurking cruelty, its curious combination of fierce impulsiveness and baffling secrecy, its instinct for dramatic effect, and its impotence for practical effectiveness, were all exemplified in that famous rising, of which the ultimate result was but the exchange of one foreign lordship for another.

Beyond this, on the lower slope of a hill, are the picturesque, irregular church and dilapidated monastic buildings of Santa Maria e Gésu, one of the sweetest spots, with some of the loveliest views, in the neighbourhood of Palermo. Not far from it, amid casual cultivation and dusty desolation, are the remains of the Castello di Mare Dolce, a country palace of the Norman kings that once stood on an enchanting island in an artificial lake. Farther on is the Pizzo Cannitas, a stronghold of the Canaanite, which his Moslem kindred held even after the Norman Conquest. The little fishing-port of S. Elia preserves beside these high places of Baal the name of the strong soul left alone in Israel. Beyond this, astride a ridge of Monte Catalfano

where the mountain seems worn to the bone, was Solous, one of the three western stations held by the Phœnicians after they withdrew from the rest of the island. It is thought that great part of their wall can be traced, but the remains of houses appear to be of the Roman period. The main street, planed in the rock, runs along the ridge and the others mount to it in steps. The native stone sticks out in spikes and slices, which are built into the walls of the houses. Here were found a colossal statue of Zeus, now in the museum, a very archaic statue of Isis seated between two sphinxes, and many beautifully wrought articles of domestic use.

Confronting the remnants of Solous, some twelve miles distant, on the opposite curve of a long bight, a few fragments of a Doric temple built into a house are all that remains of Himera, the farthest outpost of Hellas in the north. To this belong the cornice with lion-head gargoyles now in the museum of Palermo, a masterly piece of sculpture worth a cityful of banalities. Himera—one would think the roughest and most frontier-like, certainly one of the most hapless and short-lived, of Sikeliot cities—survives more worthily in this noble fragment than does Pompeii in all the debased art and paltry luxury that have been preserved by the ashes of Vesuvius.

Himera is memorable for one of the greatest triumphs and one of the cruellest disasters of the Hellenic race. Here, in 480 B.C., the Sikeliots did their part in saving

LA CALDURA, CEFALÙ

western civilization in one of the greatest perils it has known, the attack made by the two huge barbarian empires that had grown up in Asia and Africa on the scattered, loosely linked Hellenic states that fringed the opposite shores. On the same day, it is said, that the Greeks of the motherland were shattering the Persian fleet at Salamis, those of Sicily, under Gelon of Syracuse, routed a great army that Hamilkar had brought from Carthage. The conflicting accounts of the battle have been the despair of historians. One picture of it by a master hand has unfortunately perished. In the lost 'Glaukos Pontios' Æschylus is said to have dealt with the Sikeliot share in the epic struggle, as in 'The Persians' he deals with the fight at Salamis, in which he himself bore a part, the one glory of his life that he cared to have recorded on his tomb. What he made of a tale of such lofty enthusiasm and dark despair as the Himeraian war, we can but regretfully surmise.

According to the Carthaginian account preserved by Herodotus, Hamilkar—as though in that great crisis he would not trust in the arm of the flesh alone—stood apart from the conflict by a large sacrificial fire, and from morning till evening strove to propitiate the heedless gods with whole burnt offerings and libations, and at length, when the tide of battle had turned hopelessly against him, with that belief in the expiatory power of human sacrifice which haunted the Semitic races, and which one of their greatest geniuses has enshrined in the heart of Christianity, flung himself, as a supreme

offering, on the altar and perished with the fortunes of his people.

The power usually so merciless to insuccess, that crucified its defeated generals, was touched to an unwonted emotion by the unavailing tragedy. Not only in Carthage, but in every one of its wide dependencies, memorials were raised to Hamilkar, and seventy years after, on the scene of his death, his grandson, Hannibal, offered a terrible sacrifice to his name. With the vast army that had destroyed Selinous, he encamped against Himera and took it. The usual indiscriminate slaughter commenced, but Hannibal stayed it and bade that captives should be taken. The women and children were led into the camp as slaves ; the men were taken to the spot where Hamilkar had given himself to death, and there, with manifold tortures, mutilations and mockery, slaughtered to appease his shade. The city of Himera was razed to the ground, and the hill on which it stood has lain desolate ever since.

It was one of those merciless national executions peculiar to the Semitic races, of which we have such awful examples in Hebrew history. Indeed, whenever Phœnicians come upon the scene, our thoughts are led from the hills of Sicily to those which stand about Jerusalem. The Carthaginian Shophetim not only bear the title, but breathe the spirit, of the strong-handed, stern-souled men who 'judged' Israel. In the enumeration of Hamilkar's forces we read of chariots of war, such as those with which Jabin defended Canaan, and Ahab and Jehoshaphat fought at Ramoth.

Hamilkar, abiding by the altar through the battle, reminds us of Moses on Mount Horeb with his arms stayed up to heaven. Always in the background of the grave, tenacious race is the dark, debasing worship which disgusted and repelled the Greek, but which had such a fatal attraction for the kindred Hebrew. For, profound as was the gulf that the faith delivered to Abraham had made between them, Hebrew and Canaanite differed little in blood and speech, or in the fundamental conceptions that underlie and mock at creeds. Hannibal spoke the same tongue as Hananiah, and the names differed only according as Baal or Jehovah had been invoked at their birth, and Hannibal at Himera doubtless felt as assured of divine approval as did the relentless seer who hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

VII

THE NORTH-WEST CORNER

The Greek remains in Sicily are the only buildings that can compare with the Norman churches in beauty and interest. The shortest visit to Palermo should include a day at Segesta, where there is an impressive Greek temple and a typical theatre, and on the journey to which we pass through some of the finest scenery in the island. Handicapped though Sicilian scenery be by the extravagant praise that has been lavished on it, yet he were hard to please who, on a sunny day, can make the journey from Palermo to Segesta without contented delight ; who, for the time being, asked more than these blue bays and bold headlands, these accumulated hills, at first little more than bare masses of rock, spreading out at the base into slopes of screes, on which dark, umbrageous carob-trees seem maintaining a precarious footing. Lower down are groves of ancient olives—some of the most remarkable in the island—grey, ghostly trees, with tortured, bony trunks, often hollowed and riven, the sort of tree in which Merlin, cajoled by heartless Vivien out of the spell 'of woven

paces and of waving hands,' may have been immured through dreary centuries ; later, the hills are rounded, fertile, and densely cultivated ; then come dunes of golden sand, darkly dotted with dwarf, crouching conifers, and overspread, wherever the sand is mixed with soil, by vines and vegetables, for patient, primitive Sicilian industry neglects no yard of ground on which anything to eat can be made to grow. Colourless, close-built, flat-roofed towns, in which the cultivators live, sprawl upon the plains, or are set on rocky hills beneath perched fragments of castles. Nature and man have admirably co-operated in the scene-making. To be candid, it is the sort of landscape that requires helping out by human handiwork. The hills appear incomplete and meaningless unless the upper rocks merge into battlements and towers, and white-walled towns cling to their sides. Ragged ridge and stony summit are crested with the shells of old fastnesses, in which the natural and the builded stone are hardly distinguishable. Farther on we come to an open, rolling country, green in spring with wheat, yet often seeming for miles a land without inhabitant. These are the *latifondi*, the vast, semi-feudal estates, whose widespread, smiling acres are sometimes spoken of in economical and social discussions as the plague-spots of Sicily.

This north-west corner of Sicily was the last refuge of the Sikan and Elymian population, whoever they may have been. Using terms of shifting signification for matters that growing knowledge and widening study shroud daily in deeper obscurity, we have called

the Sikel Aryan, and denied the name to Sikan and Elymian, whom, however, we considered distinct from one another ; but Professor Sergi, tracking his forbears to their last refuge, and making the grave give up its secrets, maintains that we can assume no difference in race or origin between Sikan, Sikel and Elymian, Etruscan, Mykenaian and Pelasgian, that only long, geographical separation and environment have thus differentiated various portions of the vast stream of humanity that welled up from the south—from teeming, shrouded Africa—and surged and settled round the great inland sea, fringing it with an anthropically homogeneous population that may fairly be termed Mediterranean.

Twelve miles from Palermo is the station of Isola delle Femine, the halting-place for the small island of that name, nearly opposite which was the Sikan city-state of Hykkara, which at the time of the Athenian expedition was engaged in what Thucydides evidently thought unnatural warfare with its Elymian neighbour, Segesta. To aid Segesta against Selinous, a much more formidable enemy, was the ostensible object of the disastrous Athenian enterprise, and the capture and sack of Hykkara was one of the small, useless successes in which Nikias frittered away the precious time that might have given him Syracuse, and changed the history of Greece and perhaps of Europe. The little Sikan state was made over to the Segestaians ; such of the inhabitants as were worth carrying away were taken as slaves. A little girl among them, called by her

captors Lais, condemned by her country's ill-fortune and her own exceeding beauty to a life of splendid and famous shame, is the only Hykkaraian whose name has found a place in history.

The hapless Hykkara is supposed to have bequeathed its name to Carini, a picturesque little town with a finely placed castle. Farther on, four miles from its station, is the interesting town of Alcamo, the ancient Longaricum, with battlemented walls and castle, parapeted and balconied houses, and some half-dozen old churches. The Moslem inhabitants gave some trouble to the great Frederick, who transplanted them elsewhere, and peopled the town with Christians, but it still has an oriental appearance, and the collector of anthropic types, who has such a happy hunting-ground in Sicily, will find many good subjects to kodak as Arabs.

The traveller can drive hence to Segesta, crossing the Fiume Freddo, the ancient Krimisos, and recalling the noblest figure, and one of the most glorious episodes, in Sikeliot history—the victory of 11,000 Greeks, under Timoleon, over 70,000 Carthaginians. The usual course, however, is to leave the train at the *fermata* of Segesta, fifty miles from Palermo, whence a walk or drive of about five miles through a green, undulating valley leads to all that remains of the ancient Elymian city.

The Segestaians themselves were not troubled with the questions as to their origin that vex the modern student. Either for political convenience, or from a freak of patronage, their Greek neighbours had sup-

plied them with an ancestral tree rooted in the great Hellenic myth, which provided a sort of Heralds' Office for any ancient city in want of a founder. To the satisfaction of all concerned, it was discovered that Segesta—in Greek mouths, Aigesta—was founded by Æneas, and named after Aigestos, son of Krimisos, who went from Sicily to fight for Troy, and returned in time to receive Æneas and help him to bury his father. Great is the power of words; it would appear that once the fantastic genealogy was promulgated, and the Elymians placed under the unimpeachable sponsorship of Homer, they had a standing that was never even imaginable for the Phœnician, and that the Sikel only obtained by the Hellenization in which he lost his ethnic individuality. The fateful dispute between Segesta and Selinous, though it largely turned on boundaries, involved also some question of marriage-rights, which showed that the Elymian state enjoyed relations with its Greek neighbours altogether peculiar among the non-Hellenic inhabitants of Sicily.

The history of Segesta is mainly a record of opportunist alliances. In 580 B.C. we find it in alliance with Phœnicians against Selinous; in 454, at war with Phœnicians; in 416, it obtained—it is said by a trick, the success of which does little credit to Attic acuteness—the aid of Athens against Selinous, with disastrous results for its ally. Four years after this, Segesta at length compassed the destruction of its neighbour by the help of Carthage. As the ally of Carthage, she was beleaguered in 395 by forces of Dionysios, but held out

YARD AT MONTE SAN GIULIANO

till, in the following year, the Syracusan conquests were won back by Himilkon. She apparently again changed sides in the secular struggle, for in 307, when the great temple was in building, she seems to have been in some sort of alliance with Agathokles. When that gifted and graceless adventurer, bankrupt and infuriated from the failure of his daring expedition to Africa, landed at what had been Selinous, he marched to Segesta and demanded money. This not forthcoming, he put to death with torture—an un-Hellenic barbarity that he had learnt from his Semitic foes—all the inhabitants of mature age that he could lay hands on, repopulated the city with miscellaneous riff-raff, and, with grim irony, changed its name to Dikaiosune, the City of Righteousness. The old name, however, shortly revived, and the new inhabitants soon came to think themselves thorough Trojans. They gave such help as they could to Pyrrhos in his all-but-successful attempt to oust the barbarian from Sicily, and when, in the middle of the third century, the Romans came to stay, they won the Segestaian heart by claiming them as Trojan kinsmen. When and how the inglorious history came to an end we do not know. Segesta certainly existed in the fourth century, A.D., and almost certainly existed no longer at the time of the Norman Conquest in the eleventh. Nothing now remains of it but a few pavements and foundations, the theatre, carved in the rocky summit of the hill on whose slopes the city stood, and, standing apart on a little hill below, the unfinished temple of an unknown god.

The present name of the double-headed hill of Segesta is Monte Barbaro—as it were, the vulgar tongue's ironical comment on the city's mythical claim. The theatre is cut out of the solid limestone that forms its N.N.E. and highest summit. Flights of steps divide the benched hollow for spectators, the theatre proper, into seven wedge-shaped sections. It is divided into an upper and a lower part by a gangway that runs along the whole arc. The foundations of the stage, which was about ninety feet wide, remain. Behind it lay the magnificent view that the Greeks always sought as setting for their dramas ; in this respect no theatre in Sicily—with the possible exception of that at Taormina, where, however, the Greek theatre has been vulgarized out of all recognition by the Romans—can compare with it, though it is not so complete, nor has it the great associations of the theatre of Syracuse.

The glory of Segesta is its temple. Either from wealth or devotion, the Sikeliot cities were much more given to temple-building than those of the Hellenic motherland ; indeed, the Greek chapter in the history of architecture would be very fragmentary without the temples of Sicily. Both on this account, and because Greek architects found the supreme expression of their art in the Doric style, which they kept sacred to their religious edifices, it may be well here to mention the main features of Greek temples, and the technical terms employed in describing them.

These features can be conveniently catalogued by pointing out, as in the textbooks, that each is the

THE TEMPLE, SEGESTA

evolution of some feature in the primitive wooden hut that was the first house of God, built after the fashion of the houses of men beside it. The columns were at first the straight trunks of trees used as posts. The echinos, spreading out like a flower from the necking at their top, and the abakos, a projecting square slab above it, distributed their thrust under the superincumbent weight. The architrave was the rectangular frame of beams above them. The projection of the transverse beams that rested on it became the tryglyphs, the flat space between them the metopes, which, later, were filled with sculpture in relief ; the two last were together spoken of as the frieze ; above it, a projecting cornice screened the overlapping eaves. The architrave, frieze and cornice are together termed the entablature. The gables at each end of the wedge-shaped roof were termed the pediment, their inner triangle, which was later filled with sculpture, the tympanum.

The earlier temples were simply the space within the four walls, lit and entered by a door on the east. The projection of the side walls, termed antæ, formed a porch ; and this type survived afterwards for smaller shrines styled temples in antis. The porch was gradually extended, ornamented with several columns, and often repeated at the back. Then this columned space was carried along the sides, and from the wings thus given it the temple was styled peripteral ; when the spaces between the columns were built up, pseudo-peripteral. The temples always faced east, or nearly so, and were distinguished as hexastyle, octastyle, and

so on, according as they showed six, eight, or other number of columns on their front. The whole was raised on a platform of three or more steps, termed the stylobate. The columns had no pedestals, and were fluted with from sixteen to twenty deep grooves, which were cut after they were placed in position.

All these later additions were but accessories to the temple proper, which remained the original four-walled, windowless building within. This was usually divided into three parts: the centre was the naos, or holy place, enshrining the image and presence of the god; in front of this was the pronaos, and behind, closed with doors, the opisthodomos, or treasury. It is thought that in the later and larger temples, this interior structure was lit from the roof, which, however, no longer exists in any of them.

Very noticeable in the earlier buildings, when stone first superseded wood, is the distrust of the new material, illustrated by exaggerated precautions against thrust: the bulky columns, the slight space between them, the massive echinos, the broad abakos. Very cautiously and tentatively were they relaxed. The diminishing modulus that gives the ratio of the basal diameter of a column to its height is an almost sure indication of date.

A mere catalogue of parts and details gives little notion of the transcendent charm of Doric temples. They had long been admired and copied before the secrets of their serene and harmonious grandeur were suspected. We built a Royal Exchange and were surprised that we did not have a Parthenon. It

was in studying this supreme masterpiece that the English architect Pennithorne in 1837 first divined the explanation of what all the world had felt. His observations have since been amply verified; it has been shown that the impression of unity, majesty and harmony given by a Doric temple is the carefully calculated effect of the correlation of all its parts, aided by a multitude of subtly impressionist contrivances. Everything seems what it ought to be by virtue of not being what it seems. Lines that seem straight are delicately curved; lines that seem vertical are slightly inclined; moulding is specially drawn for its place, or takes the natural curves of a conic section; the measurement of the principal parts is decided by a fixed modulus from the diameter of the column; each gives the notion of being so exactly fitted for the place it fills and the work it has to do that it cannot feel strain or stress, and lays no burden on another. The most uninstructed eye is captivated by the charm, and is satisfied with it, so perfectly satisfied that analysis seems out of place. We do not note, perhaps, the infinite pains and thought that have gone to the proportion and shaping of every detail, but we feel instinctively that the structure is an organic whole, knit together by a gracious interdependence and sympathy.

Their temples seem to tell us more of the religious feeling of the Greeks than all the fables of the poets. They give us its solemn and serious, we may even say its spiritual, side. We cannot dismiss the faith that inspired these noble buildings as childish credulity

or barbaric superstition. Crude and outworn as the early conceptions have become to us, they testify to the obstinate haunting of invisible things that humanity has never been able to put by. We speak of them superciliously as anthropomorphic, forgetting that any notion man can have of the divine must be anthropomorphic, and that the central idea of Christianity itself is not an apotheosis but an incarnation. The old imaginings may have become unmeaning to us, but man's invincible surmise which they expressed is innate and abiding. To the end of time he will make himself gods in his image as an objective outcome of his conviction that, though slow, dark centuries have moulded him in the likeness of an ape, there is that in him which was made in the image of God. There is no pause and no finality in the process, the formulations that seek to stereotype it must, when they have served their day, be set aside or left behind ; still—as in the profound and not yet all unfolded teaching of Jesus—the only notion that man can have of the divine will be the abstract of the highest, in conception and aspiration, that he finds in his fellows and himself.

The temple of Segesta is a peripteral hexastyle, showing twelve columns at the sides. It stands on a stylobate of four high steps, the stones of which are merely draughted. There are many other indications that its building was interrupted on the eve of completion : the naos has apparently never been built ; the bosses for raising the huge blocks of travertine, the

GARDEN AT MONTE SAN GIULIANO

chiselling off of which was one of the final touches, still remain ; the columns are unfluted. They are over six feet in diameter at the base, the height not quite five diameters ; they taper upwards with a slight entasis, the subtle convex curve by which Greek architects counteracted the optical illusion that makes a tapering shaft rising in an absolutely straight line appear concave. Those at the corners are somewhat smaller than the others ; this was one of the latest refinements of Doric. A passage of Thucydides gives ground for placing the date of the temple between 430 and 420 B.C.

The site is impressive : a small hill, boldly scarped on one side ; higher hills, bare and desolate, surround it, except in one direction, where it looks down the green valley to an undulating plain that, on the left, slopes to the sea, in other directions is shut round by hills. The views are particularly pleasing when seen from the interior, framed in the weather-worn and fretted stone, which is of exquisite colouring, tawny and ruddy hues shading into soft tones of grey.

The great building seems more lorn and desolate standing amid the smooth green of recent cultivation than if it were surrounded by deserted streets and ruined walls. These, from which it always stood apart, have long since mouldered into the soil on which the wheat waves green or golden, or the stony hill where sheep glean a scanty sustenance. Of all the buildings of that famous city, the temple that was never finished alone stands, immutable and inscrutable, unshaken by

a thousand earthquakes, scarce scathed by centuries of storm, not telling the secret of the worship for which it was raised, or of the race that raised it. We know not to which god of the Greeks it was to be dedicated, nor what shades of ancient and unsceptred gods may have haunted that new one's sanctuary, and asserted their ancient sway over his votaries. What dim, deep-rooted prejudices and predilections, what dark, sinister beliefs, may have lurked in Elymian consciousness beneath the veneer of Hellenic mythology; what unhallowed and forbidding rites may have been grafted on the worship of Apollo or Aphrodite, or some other bright Hellenic deity for whom this Doric temple was being reared.

It is often said that it lacks the interest of a temple that has been used for religious worship, but this also adds to its pathos and its mystery. It seems to stand in patient majesty, biding the time that has never come, gazing as in a dream towards the streak of sea and the shadowed hills, as though expecting that some day, in the strange cycle of human thought, the hour of its fulfilment may arrive, and hammer and chisel give the final blows so long delayed, and the great train of worshippers wind up with sacrifice and song for its dedication. But not thus do the old faiths rise again; such resurrection as they have is in strangely altered forms in the mind of man; the material shrine, stand it never so solidly, must pass at length into the nature of which it is part; the spirit that dwelt in it shall know it no more.

SEA-COAST AT SELINUNTE

VIII

SELINUNTE

The considerable town of Castelvetrano, twenty-four miles beyond Segesta, is the halting-place for Selinunte, the ruined Selinous, which lies seven and a half miles off. Here we first come across traces of that great Greek colonization which, with the rival Semitic settlements, give an abiding world-interest to early Sicilian history. It is somewhat unfortunate that in speaking of it we have to use the word colony, which, both in its Roman origin and in much of its later use, embodies ideas altogether different from those of the Greek oversea settlements, with which our own history of the last half-century has made us happily familiar.

Selinous is not so good an example as many of the status of these settlements, for its mother-city, the Sicilian Megara, was too unimportant, too short-lived and of too questionable origin, for the relations between the two to illustrate the light yet indissoluble bond that always linked the daughter-state, and any later state that might spring from her, to the mother-community in the elder Hellas. The younger city might far sur-

pass the older, as Syracuse surpassed Corinth, in dominion and importance, yet it was to her that she turned for counsel in distress, and it was to the ancient temples that she sent thank offerings for her triumphs.

Of course, in so volatile and quarrelsome a race, this complete political independence sometimes had its painful side; but, as a rule, the words that Kipling lends to our Lady of the Snows,

> 'Daughter I am in my mother's house, but mistress in my own,'

might have been used by any Greek colony to express its happy relations with the state that founded it. In fact, the Greeks had intuitively grasped the secret of a colonial system whose base was the sea, which we only learnt by the loss of half a continent. If only a little Attic salt could have been rubbed into George III., how different might be the dominion of George V.

And here, as one born and bred in a British colony, I cannot refrain from expressing jealousy at Greek good-fortune in a habit of speech that enabled them to coin, at will and at need, such words as Sikeliot. It is difficult to overestimate the value to a race of such terminological resource. The Greek settler in Sicily, or in that part of Italy which came to be looked on as Great Greece, could call himself Sikeliot or Italiot, and in a word express where and whence he was, suggest all in the past and the present that he loved and was proud of; but our mixed, pollarded mother-tongue affords no such resource to the race that more

than any other since the world began has needed it. The Englishman in America, Australia, New Zealand, has no word with which to name himself but one that stands indifferently for him or for the red man, black man, or yellow man that he has dispossessed. Even when the survival of the strongest shall have left him the sole bearer of the title, it will but express the most obvious fact in his circumstance, will make no suggestion of an elder land and a storied past. Hardly indeed can we claim to have any general term for the race throughout its far-spread homes. Englishman in any one of them suggests a late arrival, Briton is merely an unappealing literary cipher, while, where the more idiomatic form Britisher is found, it implies something a little alien and a little depreciatory.

Within our own borders we have an example of the value of the appeal to the imagination given by greater linguistic vitality in the European tongue most akin to our own, but not hybridized and paralysed by foreign conquest. Who can tell what has been the value of 'that blessed word Afrikander' to the virile race scattered through our whilom South African colonies, or, let us hope, the value that it will be to the new nation that has been born to them and us, for names are not idle, but at once a birthright and a watchword to those who bear them. In the annals of the greater Hellas that fringed the Mediterranean shores, more than two thousand years ago, one's thoughts are continually led to present-day questions in connection with oversea settlements whose links are the oceans of the

globe. In this respect the early history of Sicily is writ large with example and with warning. At every step we seem to pass gateways into vanished lands of promise, or handwriting upon ruined walls.

All that remains of Selinous lies strewn and piled upon three long dunes running north and south, their inland ends rising in an easily defensible slope from the plain, their seaward ends standing in bold bluffs above the narrow strip of sand that here forms the coast. Between them are now two swampy dells, along which little streams creep and ooze to the sea, but the lower ends of which must evidently have once been creeks, which have been gradually choked with the waste of the land. It requires a robust respect for antiquity to recognize these as the Rivers Selinous and Hypsas, whose mouths formed the harbours that were the first essential of a Greek colony.

The colony of a colony, and that the least of Sikeliot cities, Selinous waxed and flourished with a rapidity that roused barbarian dread and Hellenic jealousy. The earliest city on the central of the three dunes, where are seen to-day the ruins of the Akropolis and of the most ancient temples, soon spread down into the dells and up over the higher ground on either side, where, after the manner of prosperous Sikeliot cities, there rose a fringe of temples, as though to supplement the cramped material defences by a barrier of holy ground.

The stately city was, like Himera, doomed from its position as the southern outpost of Hellas on the west to bear the brunt of the secular strife that was always

smouldering and ever ready to flame into war. Its close relations, involving reciprocal marriage rights, with its neighbour Segesta, whose racial alienation was masked by a veneer of Hellenism and a mythical genealogy, have been already mentioned. Disputes about this, and about the broad wheat-lands that lay upon the borders of the two states, led Segesta to seek oversea alliance, first with Athens, with little profit to herself and disaster to her ally, then, with terrible effectiveness, with Carthage. Hannibal the mis-Hellene, as Diodoros terms him, was Shophet in those days, and eagerly persuaded the government to give him the opportunity of executing his long-nursed vengeance for the defeat and death of his grandfather. Landing at the promontory of the sacred spring, where afterwards stood Lilybaion, with a vast heterogeneous army—including, sad to say, a contingent of Greeks—he marched swiftly on Selinous, while the sister cities stood sullenly aloof, or grudgingly voted aid. The resistance was heroic, affording ample interval for Syracuse and Akragas to send in time the aid that came too late ; but the Selinuntines by themselves were hopelessly outmatched, both in numbers and equipment. On the second day of attack a practicable breach was made, but through seven succeeding days desperate hand-to-hand fighting went on, first in the breach, then from street to street, as the ceaselessly reinforced enemy took barricade after barricade from the wearied and dwindling defenders. Women on the house-tops accompanied the slow retreat of the men below, hurling down tiles and stones, till even these

missiles failed. On the evening of the ninth day all the able-bodied citizens that were left made a last stand in the Agora, and were cut down to a man. Then there set in an orgy of butchery and outrage such as no Greek city had yet had to endure at the hands of the barbarian, which, Diodoros notes, moved even the unworthy Greeks in the Carthaginian ranks to vain compassion. The narrative of the Sikeliot chronicler seems to thrill with horror as he tells how the brutal soldiery paraded the streets of the devastated city, bearing severed heads upon their pikes, and decorated with garlands of amputated hands. At length, sated for the moment with death and destruction, and having despatched shiploads of slaves and plunder to Carthage, the great mis-Hellene gathered together his blood-glutted host, and marched across the island to Himera on family business of his own.

From that terrible day Selinous never recovered. In 407 Hermokrates, the broad-minded Syracusan patriot, established himself here, and the city seems to have had some sort of existence till the first Punic war, in 263, during which it was finally destroyed by the Carthaginians, and the inhabitants removed to Lilybaion. Once again the spot appears in history, when the Saracens entrenched themselves among the ruins in a last desperate stand against the Norman conquerors. Whether the overthrow of the temples dates from the first or the second Carthaginian capture ; whether, as is currently believed, an earthquake finally cast down what man had spared, we do not know. Some think

that from the disposition of the fallen buildings we can decide whether their destruction was wrought by human rancour or in the earth's awful play ; but the doubtful significance of the indications is evident from the conflicting conclusions that different observers have drawn from them.

I doubt if there be any spot on earth that has such an immanent mournfulness. Most ruins with all their pathos have a suggestion of calm content ; the tender grace of a day that is dead lingers on them as they yield to the beneficent forces that are ever renewing the face of the earth ; but this wreckage of a great city on the hills of Selinunte seems a record of malignant violence, of destruction deliberate and delighted in, which oppresses with a tragic sense of the futility of human achievement. In a revel of triumphant and vindictive hate—or, it may be, in a mere shrug of adjustment of the insensate earth—the stateliest city of the western world, the superbest shrines that human hands had yet fashioned for human faith, were levelled to the ground. As they fell so they lie, cast down but not destroyed, I suppose the most impressive monument of ruin—of man's inhumanity to man, or nature's careless havoc—that the world can show.

Whether awed by that great destruction, or because the tide of affairs took other channels, no community has since cared to dwell on those desolate headlands by the sea, unless, as has been surmised from some rude crosslike marks upon the ruins, Christian hermits in the earlier centuries of the era sought here the shelter

and solitude that was all they asked of earth, and scratched upon the fallen shrines of the old laughter-loving gods the symbol of divine self-sacrifice.

Selinous is taken in Mr. Inigo Trigg's 'Town Planning' as 'the earliest regularly laid out city of which we have any trace.' In its heaped and scattered remnants we may read the history of Greek building in its greatest period. We have the early Akropolis, built of carefully squared blocks of fossiliferous lime-stone laid without mortar, on the central hill; the wall of huge blocks that enclosed the port; the little domestic buildings of large stones. On the western hill is a sacred enclosure with porch and altar, and a great building supposed to be the Megaron of Demeter; here an enormous number of earthenware statuettes and various utensils have been found. Above all, in the series of temples we see the evolution of the sacred Doric style. In the venerable temples on the central hill, we have its rude commencement in that known as D; an added grace and deftness, and growing sense of proportion, in temple C, whose prostrate columns with disjointed drums lie side by side with the blocks of entablature beyond, as though arranged ready for raising into position. There is still a tentative character, shown in the tapering pillars, the flat bulging capitals, the heavy architrave; but temple E on the eastern hill, in which a tablet inscribed, 'Arkesos son of Aischylos to Here,' was found near the altar, belongs to the culminating period of the style, and must have been a fit setting for the noble sculpture that adorned its

A DEAD CITY, SELINOUS

metopes, which, as Freeman laments, 'torn far away from the charm and teaching of local presence, now looks down on the transplanted tombs of the daughters of Canaan among the antiquarian plunder of the Sicilian capital.' Next to this, in the archaic temple F, whose interior is screened by a wall connecting the columns, it has been conjectured that we have a shrine where mysteries were celebrated. The tiny temple B, which might have been crushed, as under the heel of a giant, by a single drum of the great Temple of Apollo, preserves examples of the polychromatic adornment of Greek temples; exterior and interior were apparently stuccoed throughout and painted, the ground a light drab, freely decorated with red, blue, white, grey and black, all in flat tints.

The spectacle of ruin culminates in the piled and scattered remains of the vast temple known as G, which an inscription proves to have been dedicated to Apollo. The great squared blocks, the huge drums, moulded capital and sculptured architrave, are not only overthrown, but heaped and flung about as though in titanic devilry. Some fragments are so perched and tilted that one wonders how they could have got into such a position, and how they can have since maintained it. This pseudodipteral octastyle was one of the largest temples of the Hellenic world; its construction seems to have been spread over a considerable period, marked by three different styles of capital, from that in which the heavy echinos appears a mere constructional adjunct to the shaft, distributing its support, to the perfected

form in which it seems part of the same organic growth. Though the naos was inserted, and the building probably used for worship, it was never finished in many of its details ; the greater part of the columns, including that which now rears its lonely and colossal bulk above the chaos, were at the time of its destruction still without the perpendicular fluting that gave such an austere serenity to Doric architecture. Some have the polygonal section by which the circular shaft was prepared for grooving. The outer columns, including the capitals, were a little over fifty-seven feet high, eleven feet in diameter at the base, eight below the capital ; the side of the abakos was thirteen feet.

In the ancient quarries, now known as the Rocche di Cusa, some seven or eight miles from Selinous, we see every stage in the quarrying of the huge drums of which these columns were built up. The cutting round was commenced next the column, and continued outwards until a space of two or three feet was left between the rock and the great cylinder, which was finally detached below, it is supposed by fracture. In some the process is just commenced ; in others, partially or almost wholly completed ; parts of circles in the rock show where some have been removed. Even the mighty ruins themselves hardly give so impressive a notion of the toil and determination of the old temple-builders as the sight of these tremendous masses of stone, so laboriously excised, which had to be carried over miles of hilly and swampy ground, and finally up a steep ascent. Several lie casually, as though

awaiting transport, at the foot of the hill, couched in grey asphodel, and draped with pink-flowering convolvulus; crimson adonis, blue borage and golden marigolds nestling in their gashes. The measurements of some so exactly correspond with those of the great unfinished temple that there can be little doubt that they were intended for it. One had got a mile on its way when the work was stayed for ever, and has lain there stranded for over a score of centuries. 'L'homme propose——' is writ large over the region.

A priest of the great Disposer, conning his breviary as he wended his way amid the stupendous ruin, when last I was there, seemed an assertion of changed ideals, and must be regarded as a survival of the fittest. I could not help picturing him confronted with one of his Hellenic foregoers—who would also very likely be a disappointing personage, with more of the butcher than the seer about him—with what blank incomprehension would they stare at one another. Yet, maybe, could each break through the hard crust of inadequate expression—the language that conceals our thoughts—he would find that, far apart as their spirits had wandered, they had started from an inkling of the same verity; for, after all, the deeper polytheism and the larger sacramentalism are not so widely sundered.

Our notion of Greek mythology—assuredly not the least gracious of the many mansions that man's spirit has found in its pathway through reality—would probably be very different had we learnt it from the priests instead of from the poets. Yet, could priest and poet

return, how little could either tell us of that which was closer to each than breathing. Belief is fluid, however crystallized be the creeds ; it depends on a current context of thought and wont that is for ever passing, and implicit with which is a past unremembered and unimaginable, a human document on which every age has scrawled its undecipherable script, and beside which the hoariest of formulated creeds is a palimpsest of yesterday. For all the hidden past is impact in humanity with the most superficial accretions ; deep in primary strata of our being, brood dumb, insistent instincts, long-descended, strangely-ancestored prepossessions and obsessions. Of these, and of all that have been before and after them, down to the spawn of the passing day, is engendered the spirit that fashions the hearts and shapes the ends of human communities, the spirit that always and everywhere has quickened the letter of the law into such life as then and there it can have. It meddles not with the codes and creeds that the intellect devises or accepts ; it bows before them and lets them be ; but it says in its heart, ' Tush, they know not what they ask,' and silently moulds their outcome into forms that satisfy it.

IX

MARSALA

After Campbello the rail reaches and follows the south-west coast. Soon Mazara, seated by its little port on the river from which it takes its name, rises ahead, with its walls, domes and ruined castle—an imposing town without, but squalid and dirty within. Here we pass from Greek to Phœnician Sicily. The River Mazaros was the boundary between the two. On the left bank, where stands the present town, the Selinuntines had a fortified trading-port, which was the furthest outpost of Hellas on the west. Beyond this, the main historic interest derives from the strong and gifted Semitic race, which through four centuries was pitted in Sicily, first against the Greek, then against the Roman, in implacable war, on the issue of which was staked all that Europe holds most precious in state, home, and thought.

Though we are now among the sites of settlements that in the dawn of history were already established, yet we still have to do with colonies from without. The early history of Sicily seems so largely divided

between Greeks and Phœnicians that we are apt to forget that at no time did these form any but a small proportion of the population; that, in fact, history, more or less to our own day, does but touch the hem of the island. The more part of the inhabitants lay massed behind the fringe of alien coast-towns, and lies still outside the concern of the ordinary traveller, living its own life—so far as the exploiters, tax-gatherers, legislators, functionaries, that it eludes and deludes, will let it—in a world that in all essentials has always been several centuries behind, and ignored or misunderstood by, that with which it is in daily touch. At Marsala, which we now come to, English and Italian firms are planted very much as the Phœnicians were in the neighbouring Motya and Lilybaion: in Sicily but not of it, on good terms with the inhabitants who supply and serve them, but still substantially strangers and sojourners in a land that is not theirs.

Marsala, 'The Harbour of Ali,' which mainly occupies the site of the ancient Lilybaion, was founded by the Saracens. In Christian times it placed itself under the protection of St. Thomas à Becket, to whom the mother-church was dedicated, and whose remains afterwards found their way here. It is said that when Henry VIII. ordered the saint's tomb to be desecrated, the monks in charge of it despatched the hallowed contents to the Holy Land. By a singular coincidence, the vessel carrying them was wrecked off Marsala. Its precious freight was too valuable a windfall to be suffered to go further. There seems a certain pious piracy

in its detention, but shipwreck has always been legally construed as the act of God, and it may well have seemed that Providence had revised the proposals of the English guardians, and brought the holy relics to the haven where they should be. Here they have stayed ever since, the skull enclosed in the head of a silver bust, which is placed above the high altar on the anniversary of the turbulent saint. Sixteen Doric columns of grey marble which the city had proposed to send to the shrine of its tutelary at Canterbury—a destination clearly nullified by the disconcerting tergiversation of the Defender of the Faith—were now devoted to his Sicilian church, of which they form the chief architectural ornament.

The city's old connection with England through its patron saint is maintained in the traffic of its most noted product. Woodhouse, Whitaker and Ingham are as potent names in the neighbourhood as Thomas à Becket, and the prosperity of Marsala for upwards of a century has been largely due to these great wine firms. Established in their semi-feudal factories, enjoying practically a sort of extra-territoriality, hoisting the British flag whenever island politics became emotional, with British men-of-war always liable to loom grimly in the offing, they have minded their business to the eminent satisfaction of the population ; a permanent institution amid wars, revolutions, invasions, oppression, misrule, change of dynasty and administration.

The English firms no longer tread the wine-press

alone. In 1831, Signor Florio established a *baglio*, and of late years various smaller Italian companies have followed, so that the wine-trade is, I believe, no longer the conservative and lucrative business that it was. The long, blank walls and imposing gateways of these *bagli* extend for some miles along the coast, and give Marsala, from the sea, the look of a vast medieval fortress. *Baglio*, it may be explained, is cognate with our English bailey, and with the group of low Latin and old French words connoting safe-guard—in fact, the walled and gatewayed compounds of the two great English firms are the Old Baileys of Marsala. Each is a little world of its own, its high, secluding walls enclose factory, workshop and cooperage, farm, garden and recreation-ground, groups and avenues of shady trees, long walks amid borders and nooks of flowers, under trellised vines, by ancient ivy-covered walls—all centred round a pleasant and most hospitable English home.

In this latter aspect my grateful acknowledgments are due to the Baglio Whitaker, where, through the kind introduction of Mr. Whitaker, I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Gray, and had an insight into the world of wine-making, fascinating as are all the little technical worlds that revolve in their exacting orbits unsuspected by the great careless tide of life to which they minister. Young Mr. Gray unfolded to me the whole magician's tale, or such of it as I was able to receive, taking me through long cloistral corridors, cool shadowy halls, along what seemed miles of big-bellied pipes in which

PORT OF CEFALÙ

was maturing, the generous fluid that on Sicilian hills and plains, for a hundred years and more, had assimilated the sunshine and subtle energies of earth and air, to make glad the heart of man. How much man himself does to complete the alchemy of nature I never knew till then; fearful and wonderful are the processes that the unsophisticated juice of the grape, trodden out by the naked feet of Sicilian peasants, goes through; strange and startling are the substances introduced into it. All that I know, or am ever likely to know, of the treatment of high-class wines I learnt in an afternoon ramble with that patient and instructive young man; could he write a few pages for me here, my book would be vastly the gainer, but, failing this, I am not going to air second-hand lore. 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing——' I will not continue the quotation, it might seem compromisingly pertinent.

To the north of Marsala lies the Stagnone, a shallow gulf in which three flat, green islands seem almost to float, barely holding their own against the lapping waves. On that now called San Pantaleo, which is the nearest to the coast, once stood the crowded and lofty houses of Motya. Isola Lunga and Barrome, the islands on the seaward side of it, were then joined to one another and to the coast in a long narrow arm of land, bent as at an elbow, that formed the port. The little island was in time built over, and as it was too far from the coast for the city to spread inland, like Syracuse, it could only house its growing population by extending upwards,

piling story upon story in sky-scrapers, of which we have a description in the accounts of the city's siege and fall, to which we owe most of our notion of it. It had then, with the other Phœnician settlements in Sicily, become virtually a dependency of Carthage. In the face of Hellenic expansion, some confederation of the scattered commonwealths under the strong kindred power had probably become a necessity ; equally of necessity they had thenceforth to bear the brunt of the secular strife. For it was not until these ancient little communities passed under the hegemony of their mighty younger sister in Africa that what may be called Punic imperialism in Sicily set in ; Gelon checked it for two generations at Himera ; then it gathered strength again ; Selinous, Himera, Akragas, Gela were wiped out of existence ; it seemed that the Sikeliot states were to exist only on Punic sufferance, when Syracuse under Dionysios made a bid for the primacy of the Mediterranean.

It is a thousand pities that Dionysios was a tyrant—in the later as well as the original sense of the term, and a graceless and unscrupulous one to boot—for he was a remarkable and versatile genius—statesman, soldier, poet, sportsman—who left Syracuse at his death the greatest power in Europe. His campaigns mark a distinct evolution in the art of war : an army conceived as a great military machine in which all the parts were adjusted and correlated into an organic whole, of which the navy was an integral portion. In marine warfare he antiquated the triremes by quinqueremes, the Dread-

noughts of the day. Carthage apparently had no choice but to follow suit, and that speedily, for we find her with forty of them before the first war was over. As an engineer he showed the same large and original genius, while his additions to the siege-train wrought almost as great a revolution in warfare as the invention of gunpowder.

All this took the Carthaginians completely by surprise when, in 398 B.C., he crossed their Sicilian frontier, while his brother Leptines appeared before Motya with warships and transports. The Motyans hastily set about destroying the causeway that connected the city with the mainland, but Dionysios frustrated their efforts, and broadened the work to a spacious platform for his engines. Apparently he thought he had the place to himself, for he beached his warships on the inner shore of the harbour, and left his unprotected transports at anchor near its mouth. But Carthage, unprepared though she was, could not look idly on while so valuable a strategic post was taken from her. Himilkon, stealing across by night, appeared at daybreak before Motya with a hundred picked triremes, burnt or wrecked the transports, and proceeded up the harbour to destroy the stranded warships. Dionysios, marching down the narrow peninsula between the harbour and the sea, with his archers and catapults, subjected the advancing ships to a hail of missiles which obliged them to draw out of range, and content themselves with watching the exit from the harbour where the narrow waterways reversed the balance of numbers. The Syracusan ships

could only issue line-ahead, so that each in turn would have been set on by several of the enemy. In modern nautical parlance, the great fleet of Dionysios was bottled, and its oversea supplies cut off, by the little Punic squadron. The vessels of those days were, however, more or less amphibious. Dionysios had timber ways laid down across the two and a half miles of low land that the sea has since broken through, and the imprisoned ships were hauled over to the open water. Himilkon sailed back to Carthage, leaving Motya to its fate.

Its fate made no long tarrying. Dionysios's terrible engines were conveyed along the broadened mole, and brought to bear on its imposing but obsolete fortifications. From his towers of six stories, which overtopped even the lofty walls, his battering rams thundered against the defences raised for more primitive warfare, while his petroboloi showered stones on those who manned them. The besieged, with the handiness of seafaring folk, rigged up upon the walls masts with projecting spars, from which men, protected by shield-plates, let drop flaming brands and bunches of tow saturated with pitch, on the assaulting engines ; some were set on fire, but it was not long before a breach was made, in which Hellene and Canaanite stood face to face. Then commenced a fight without quarter. The memory of Selinous, Himera and Akragas, was doubtless in the minds of all ; to the Greeks it must have seemed that the day of recompense had arrived, and the Motyans knew that they could expect no pity, and

that, pent in their island city, they had no escape. Day after day in the streets and lanes of the city the immemorial strife was fought hand to hand, and when in the evening the Syracusan trumpets called off their men, they seemed to have made no way. The great Greek army was brought to a standstill before the maze of narrow streets and towering houses that proved more defensible than the antiquated walls. At length, a night attack took the wearied defenders by surprise. They found the invaders in their midst—we do not know exactly how—and though they fought desperately to the end, the end was inevitably on the side of overwhelming numbers. In the massacre that followed, the Greek seemed in his retribution to have put on the sanguinary temper of the Semite. The Sikeliot historian's account of the measure dealt to the hapless city recalls the terrible apostrophe of the Semitic poet to the daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery, who was to be rewarded as she had served others. Dionysios had counted on great booty of slaves, but his infuriated soldiery thought only of slaughter, and gave no heed to his remonstrances. At length he sent round heralds to proclaim that those who took sanctuary in the temples of gods whom Motyans and Hellenes alike revered, should be spared. And thus was a remnant saved.

One would like to know who the gods were that enjoyed this broad allegiance. Were they the native deities of the island, whom both Greek and Phœnician found there, and learnt of from Sikel and Sikan—Demeter and the Kore who gave the fruits in their

season, and the brethren of the mystic lake, guardians of the plighted word and protectors of the slave—kindly gods of the earth who took no part with the embattled hosts of heaven, or with their warring votaries below?

All this massacre and havoc made no permanent difference in the relative position of Greeks and barbarians in Sicily. In the following year, Himilkon reconquered for Carthage all that she had lost, and the north-west corner of Sicily remained a barbarian stronghold till a mightier champion arose for Europe than the distracted and divided Hellenic commonwealths. But Motya never rose again. It is significant of the change brought about by Carthage in Punic aims in Sicily that the ancient island trading-station was succeeded by an elaborate fortress on the promontory at the mouth of the harbour, the most westerly point of the Sicilian mainland.

The new city took the name of Lilybaion, from the sacred spring which still wells up in the Church of the Baptist. No pains were spared to make it, what it proved, impregnable. The huge moats cut in the solid rock from sea to sea, baffled Pyrrhos, held the Romans at bay during a siege of eight years, and only passed out of Punic hands in the final cession of all their possessions to Rome in 242 B.C.

Mr. Whitaker is the owner of the little island on which stood Motya, which has since been given the name of the Nikomedaian S. Pantaleo. There he has built a house for spring resort, and is making excava-

tions that are gradually enlarging our scanty knowledge of the Phœnicians in Sicily. There are few excursions to which I look back with greater pleasure than one that was kindly arranged for me by Mr. Gray in the company of Mr. Whitaker's devoted friend and agent, Signor Lipari, an enthusiastic archæologist. Could I recall all the curious lore with which he entertained me as, on a breezy spring day of sunshine and flying cloud, we were sailing to and fro or rambling about the island, reconstructing the old Phœnician city and its vanished life, I should be able to write the most interesting chapter of this book.

The harbour, he thinks, was never very different from what it is now. The passages which we threaded and the shoals over which we bumped were the sea-defences of Motya, the hard navigation that Æneas enumerates among his perils passed:

'Vada dura lego et saxis Lilybeïa cæcis.'

The vestiges of building on the island have been sadly plundered for stone for construction of salt-works on the opposite shore, but nearly the whole circuit of the wall, which rose from the water's edge, and seven mural towers, can be traced. Everywhere calcined stones and cement bear witness to destruction by fire. At the end of the main street of the city was a great water-gate flanked with towers; within this is a dock for repairs, and a line of quays by a silted-up channel where the Phœnician merchantmen unladed. There seems to have been another water-gate on the northern

shore, near the causeway to the mainland. Along this causeway, which is covered with a few inches of water, peasants still drive their carts. Another connection with the mainland was an aqueduct on the east, which brought water across the harbour to the island in leaden pipes resting on stone pillars, remains of both of which have been found. One of Signor Lipari's cherished ambitions is the restoration of this ancient water-supply by Mr. Whitaker.

Near the villa are the remains of dye-works: a well, conduits for water, basins for dyeing, amphoræ built into masonry; a large one that has been broken and riveted with lead contains some of the dried pigment, which is also strewn in clots around, and still, after being exposed to sun and rain for over two thousand years, gives, when broken, the brilliant Tyrian crimson. Nothing on the island, I think, seems so strange a link with the past, or so striking a record of the sudden destruction that came upon it, as these casually preserved and scarcely changed fragments of what one would have thought so evanescent. Shells of *murex trunculus* and *brandaris*, from which the dye was obtained, have been collected here, and placed in the museum.

This little museum, Signor Lipari's joy and pride, is the chief record in Sicily of the old Phœnicians who played so large a part in the island's early life, and first brought it into touch with general civilization. On the right as you enter are finds from Motya, on the left from Lilybaion. In addition to things found

RUS IN URBE, TAORMINA

in the streets and lanes of the city, the cemeteries which lay on all the north-west of the island, and one at the mainland end of the causeway, have yielded records that probably go back to times before the Phœnicians, such as vases containing implements of the earliest bronze age. The most ancient burial was in stone coffins or by inhumation; later cinerary caskets show that cremation had been introduced through Greek neighbourhood. It would be wearisome to catalogue these and other things without Signor Lipari's running commentary, which made the whole history of the island pass like a pageant before the mind's eye. There are quaint, futile-looking arms, arrow and javelin heads that were embedded in the stones of the wall, the only billet they had found in the great siege; mirrors, scarabees, and other finery; weights for spinning wheels, and all the appurtenances of feminine home-life; miniature sculptures of winged, human-headed beasts with plaited beards, recalling the colossal monsters of Nineveh; one of these is on a funeral casket of Maltese stone; very suggestive is the appearance of this and of Pantellarian lava, in the form of millstones and slingstones, showing how Phœnician trade had spread its net over the Mediterranean; blocks of Pantellarian lava, probably brought as ballast, are here and there built into the walls. An admirable archaic relief, which was apparently over a gateway, of two leopards pulling down a bull, on which they have fastened with tooth and claw, recalls the famous Mykenai lions, but is more full of life. Still, in the worn, soiled stone we see the greedy, cruel grip

of the beasts of prey, the agonized animal tumbling forward on knees and nose, the pastern of its hind leg forced outwards to the ground.

The rude dwellings of the few peasants who now inhabit the island are clustered round a little church, in which is a naïve representation of the hamlet in 1857, ravaged by a double water-spout, and saved from total destruction by the Virgin and her child, who are seen floating on a cloud to the left.

San Pantaleo has a record of still more recent history of which it is very proud. In 1862, Garibaldi visited Marsala on his birthday, July 19, and was entertained at a sumptuous banquet, enlivened by oratory and music. After a few courses he rose abruptly, saying, 'Money is better spent on rifles than in luxury.' He got up at four next morning, and visited various places in the neighbourhood, among them this little island-hamlet, where he joined heartily in a meal of black bread and shellfish that he found some peasants taking outside their door. The incident is recorded on a tablet on the wall of a house that backs the rough stone bench on which he sat.

It is as the landing-place of Garibaldi and 'the Thousand' that Marsala claims a place in modern history. On May 11, 1860, the 'Piemonte' and the 'Lombardo,' the two little vessels into which this strange invading army was crammed, ran into the harbour under the eyes of two Neapolitan warships who could easily have sunk them. The 'Lombardo' grounded at the entrance and stuck there, and could have been raked

NEAR CALATAFIMI

from stem to stern, but it was not until the invaders and their scanty store of ammunition were landed, that the government ships opened fire, and succeeded in wounding one man. Two British men-of-war were amused spectators of this audacious making of history.

These thousand North Italians, mostly untrained civilians, armed with antiquated muskets, conquered Sicily. The *squadre*, as the Sicilian contingents were called, who rode down to meet them, armed to the teeth, and letting off venerable firearms in the air, were, beyond their effect on the nerves of the Neapolitans, of little use, and often seriously in the way.

On May 15, the little band came into touch with the government troops at the Pianto dei Romani, a rough, steep-sided plateau, rising in irregular terraces, clothed with scrub and cactus. The audacity shown in assaulting so formidable a position, held by superior numbers armed with superior weapons, is worthy of all praise ; but the fact that it was carried with the loss of thirty men sufficiently appraises the achievement as a military exploit. The *squadre*, though they did not come under fire, served a useful purpose in persuading the sensitive regulars that they were outflanked. Niceforo's account of this remarkable engagement, which is known as the battle of Calatafimi, cannot well be improved : 'The star of Italy guided a demigod in a flaming shirt to victory, and at the blare of his trumpets the Neapolitans broke into disordered flight.'

Garibaldi then played a game of bluff with great skill and resource. He endowed his little force with remark-

able mobility by the simple expedient of eliminating from their baggage-train everything except cartridges that an army is supposed to need, and, marching and countermarching, drew the pick of the Neapolitan troops and their determined Swiss commander into the heart of the island ; then, doubling back, appeared on the heights above Palermo. Keeping fires blazing in his camp, he stole down in the night and rushed the outposts before daybreak. In the street-fighting that followed the Sicilians could be utilized, and gradually acquired nerve. The patriots had an invaluable ally in Lanza, the inept and irresolute Neapolitan Governor, who finally, when Garibaldi was at his wits' end, and contemplating a retreat into the interior with his last cartridges, initiated negotiations, which resulted in one of the most astounding capitulations on record : 20,000 well-armed, well-conditioned troops marched from their strong position to the shore, where in the course of a fortnight they were shipped in batches to their sovereign at Naples.

In this Sicilian adventure we see Garibaldi at his best, overflowing with and inspiring confidence and enthusiasm ; never wanting in military instinct, which is so disappointingly absent in some of his campaigns ; unhampered by the political entanglements in which he was too often the puppet of unscrupulous intriguers. We are apt to think of him as a mere picturesque figure-head to the national movement, paraded by cleverer men than himself, but he was something more : his magnetic personality, the leonine

face, the imperturbable bearing, the enthralling voice, 'the mere sound of which made men in love with him,' his faculty of condensing ideas and aims into homely, poetic phrases that flashed like watchwords among his followers, made the man himself greater than anything he did, and an invaluable dynamic asset to his country in her great hour.

This is the episode in his career in which he was most wholly in accord with all the elements of national life. The church, so indissolubly connected with all Sicilian life, was one with the people in the proudest moment of their later history, and, to the consternation of his followers, Garibaldi appeared for the nonce as a devout son of the church. The most astute diplomacy could have suggested no better course, but there can be no doubt of his sincerity; the religious tone of the popular fervour stirred the mystic element in his nature; he entered the towns to the ringing of church bells, and the chanting of *Te Deums*, took part in the public services, and at Alcamo knelt before the crucifix, and received the benediction of the friar that held it; a priest, Father Pantaleo, was on his staff; another, Rotolo, led a hundred men into his camp at Gibilrossa, and was placed in command of the advance division of *squadre* whose panic jeopardized the night-surprise on Palermo, on which occasion Father Pantaleo was the only man who could restore something like order among his fellow islanders.

Above all, Garibaldi believed in the Sicilians, ignored their shortcomings, appreciated their good qualities,

took them seriously, in fact, in a way that his colder northern followers found it hard to share. And the heart of this emotional, ineffective people, beneath whose inordinate self-esteem rankles an uneasy resentment against the rest of the world for having never taken them at their own valuation, went out to him in fervid response, and is his to this day. There is no Sicilian town so poor but that it has its bust or statue of Garibaldi, and some street or other public place called by his name, and in the marionette theatres his exploits are represented in turn with those of the Norman knights or the paladins of Charlemagne. In truth, in this magnanimous, golden-haired deliverer, whose kindling glance and impassive bearing suggested untold reserves of ardour and strength, they saw embodied all the alien qualities that they had adored in their Norman rulers, and the dramatic assumption of which was the subconscious effort of their lives, the ideal that lived on the panels of their carts and in the puppets of their toy theatres.

MONTE SAN GIULIANO, THE ANCIENT
ERYX

X

TRAPANI

About seventeen miles beyond Marsala, the railway terminates at the pleasant and prosperous little city of Trapani, by the foot of the ancient Eryx, now Monte San Giuliano. Here, according to Virgil, the Trojan fugitives landed for a while, during which Anchises died, and was honoured by the pious Æneas with a singularly sporting funeral. Driven back here by stress of weather he founded on Mount Eryx, close to where the mortal remains of his father rested, a temple to his immortal mother, and a city that should guard it. Sea and land in the neighbourhood teem with associations with the Æneid, with the Odyssey also, if we may believe the late Samuel Butler, who spent some years here elaborating a theory that is even more disturbing to received ideas than the arguments that convinced the Irish scholar that the Iliad was not written by Homer, but by another man of the same name. Butler will not allow even another man to have written the epic of the great wanderer; he holds that it shows so much ignorance of things that men know, and so

much familiarity with those that women know; so abounds, moreover, with allusions to this region, that it could only have been written by a woman living here.

The *illætabilis ora*, as we approach Trapani, is now fringed with shining salt-works: shallow reservoirs into which the sea-water is pumped and from which it evaporates during the summer heats, leaving a deposit of salt, which is piled in great mounds and then ground by windmills. One of the few concessions of united and centralized Italy to Sicily is exemption from the salt monopoly, and this is largely taken advantage of on the two low coasts of the east and west.

Trapani, the ancient Drepana, took its name from the sickle-shaped spit of land that forms a breakwater to an inlet in the shore, thus making an excellent little harbour. Such providential geography naturally had a mythological explanation in Sicily. Some held that the sickle had fallen from the vast, nerveless hand of Time, when the Golden Age was done; others that it was cast away by Demeter in her distracted search for Persephone. Whatever deity may have dropped it, it fell most fortunately for man, and now lies, white with close-packed houses, between the troubled and the tranquil sea, sheltering an increasing crowd of shipping.

The harbour must have had a town near it from very early times, but Drepana does not appear in history till the first Punic war, when Hamilkar Barak fortified the sickle, which was thenceforth a prized Carthaginian stronghold. Lutatius Catulus failed to take it, but it fell to him as a matter of course after

MONTE COFANO FROM PORTARELLA,
TRAPANI

his victory off the Aigadian Islands which gave Rome the sovereignty of the sea. In the Middle Ages it was a frequented port of call between the three Mediterranean Continents; Edward I. landed here on his way to and from the Holy Land; here Charles of Anjou welcomed the hallowed remains of his brother Louis, at the same time plundering all the Crusaders' ships that he could lay hands on; for this and many suchlike things he had his reward in the awful Vespers of Easter Monday, 1282, and on the following 30th of August, Pedro of Aragon, touching at Trapani with his fleet on the way from Africa, was hailed as the deliverer of Sicily from the French.

Of late years, Trapani has been made the capital of a province, and has become brisk with many trades. It ships salt from the neighbouring pans to the north of Europe and to America; profits largely by the tunny-fishery in the adjacent islands, and by the coral-fishing between Sicily and the African coast; it has many craftsmen in coral and alabaster, and claims that the art of cameo-cutting was invented by one of its townsmen, Giovanni d'Anselmo, in the seventeenth century; its wine-trade is commencing to rival that of Marsala, under the name of which, in fact, most of its wine is exported. Enjoying a bright and equable winter climate, and with Monte San Giuliano as a suburb for the summer heats, it is said to be one of the pleasantest all-year-round residences in the Mediterranean.

The town contains much miscellaneous interest with nothing very striking, beyond a cleanliness so phenomenal

in Sicily that both natives and strangers are never weary of expatiating on it. None of the many churches have much architectural merit, but there are few that have not something worth seeing in or about them.

Much more noteworthy are the remains of medieval domestic architecture scattered about the city. In the older parts of the town one cannot wander far without happening on something interesting of this kind, often bold and noble in design, sometimes grotesque, but weathered into charming effect. Far more architecturally notable than any church in the city is that of the Madonna dell' Annunziata, about a mile and a half outside. Though the original building of 1332 has been sadly pulled about, many interesting features remain ; the Chapel of the Risen Christ, erected by the Seamen's Guild in 1486, is of excellent work.

A little beyond this diverges the road to Monte San Giuliano, the modern name of Mount Eryx, a huge mass of varied and much-stratified limestone on which a city, fortress, and temple have stood from the earliest days of building in Sicily ; Elymian and Hellene, Carthaginian and Roman, Saracen and Norman, have held it and worshipped here. Its takes its present name from the legend that, when Roger was besieging the city, St. Julian appeared on the walls with a pack of hounds and harried the paynim headlong over the battlements.

A motor-bus leaves Trapani every morning for Monte San Giuliano, and it is a pleasant day's excursion to mount by this, and after exploring the town, return

CASTLE OF MONTE SAN GIULIANO

on foot by the path that descends the western side of the hill among flocks of innumerable goats, watched by wild-looking, mild-mannered men, clad in cloaks with pointed hoods, and sandals and buskins of shaggy goat-skin, and carrying their midday meal in earthenware vessels that might have served Greeks or Phœnicians.

We started on this drive one bright, sunny 1st of April, and were counting on seeing the famous view from the top at its best, when, as though the day were maintaining its traditionally deceptive character, we suddenly found ourselves in the clouds. They came no whence that we could see ; the mountain seemed to have put them on ; vapour-laden winds, warmed by the rising sun, had condensed upon its chill surface and wrapped it in a clinging cerement. We drove on and up ; on one side of us brooded a sickly glare, on the other the rock and the buildings of the city towered up, stupendous and ghostly, like some titanic castle in a dream. We passed through a shadowy gateway in a monstrous wall, wound up wet, melancholy streets, and found ourselves in a space above, roofed and walled with dripping gloom. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, all was changed ; the sun glared through from the east, and, as though smitten by his flaming sword, the dank pall that covered us shuddered, shrank, shivered into a thousand fragments that floated upwards, melting into the blue, and a wide, dazzling prospect, one that appealed as much to the imagination as to the eye, burst on us as a vision.

The hill we were on, and the region below, were the

most classic ground in Sicily, famous in earliest history, peopled by the poets before history began. Wrought for all time into the great Roman epic, is that indented, gleaming shore, now fringed with houses, or laced with the lakelets and causeways of the salt-works, and that blue, hazy sea, between which and us clouds floated like fleecy islets ; below them loomed the dark bulks of the Aigadian Archipelago, where Lutatius Catulus had waylaid and crushed the Carthaginians, and Nelson had vainly watched for the French ; on the far horizon lay Pantellaria, a scrap of the great island, of which our own Malta is another scrap, and Sicily the largest remaining fragment, an island that once parted the Mediterranean into two, and that must have been severed from Europe long before it lost touch with Africa. In the dim haze beyond lurked Africa itself—vast, sullen, inchoate—with its slowly yielding secrets and barbarous millions, who may yet, when the patient, reticent, yellow races have had their say, speak the last word of humanity. From that cloaked horizon the unknown has always come to Europe, unchronicled migrations, the beginnings of our civilization, the implacable and hardly baffled perils that have welded it to tougher temper, and whetted it to keener edge. And behind us, and to our right and left, stood the tumbled hills and battered cliffs of Sicily, the ancient cynosure of three continents, where their selectest peoples have met and fought and mingled, till its rocks seem fossil history, and its soil the dust of many nations.

If human worship can consecrate, the place whereon

we stood was holy ground. Men of every creed known in the Mediterranean have worshipped on this mountain; on the rock on which we were, had stood for ages the most widely venerated temple of the ancient world, sacred to *Erycina ridens*, the goddess that under various names—Ashtaroth, Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus—and under aspects as many and anomalous as the moods of human nature, was worshipped by all the populations that fringed the great landlocked sea. Some remains of the temple have been traced within the castle, the tattered crumbling shell of a great stronghold perched on a buttressed and pinnacled rock that seems built up of huge slabs of limestone. More unmistakable than any vestiges of the temple are the considerable remains of Phœnician building in the lower part of the present town wall, uniform courses of large blocks, some of them still marked with Phœnician characters, ב, the second letter of the alphabet, occurring most frequently; sometimes upside-down, showing that it was carved before the stones were built into position. In some parts of this wall of many dates, are irregular, rudely wrought stones, which may have been fitted together by the first Elymian builders.

Erycina ridens has long closed her voluptuous court upon the mountain and our Lady of Custonaci reigns in her stead. She takes her title from a little town, some ten miles to the north-east, where her miraculous portrait, believed to have been painted by St. Luke, is enshrined. It is said that the vessel conveying it to France being belaboured by a terrific storm off Cofano,

the picture spoke and said that there it should be landed, whereupon the ship, divinely piloted, threaded the intricate channels of the dangerous coast to the shore. The inhabitants placed the sacred windfall in a cart drawn by oxen, who, like the kine that drew the ark of old, declined to go but in one direction, and lay down when they came to the place where now stands the church of Custonaci. There it has remained ever since, except when in time of trouble it is carried up the mountain with penitential pomp, and set above the high altar of the church, to be brought back after a while to the humble sanctuary below. Christianity in its tolerant adaptation of local cults had to draw a line somewhere, and cannot be deemed prudish in drawing it at the high place of Ashtaroth ; the spectacle of the new protectress—the lowly handmaid of the Lord, with the sword of sorrow in her soul—dwelling in this obscure little church beneath, and only ascending to the lofty and empty shrine of the laughing goddess when called on in great distress, may have seemed a salutary allegory of changed ideals that had put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted the humble and meek.

The Chiesa Matrice stands near the principal gate of the town. It has a detached bell-tower, with flat-arched, pilastered windows of Sicilian-Gothic, which have been built up, and a picturesque open porch with a good pointed doorway ; both church and tower have cleft Moresque battlements. In the interior, little more than the western bays remain of the original

S. GIOVANNI BATTISTA, MONTE SAN GIULIANO

building of 1314 ; the richly decorated doorway on the south, and the chapels on the north, are sad examples of the excesses perpetrated by later Gothic.

The town, which is well worth wandering about, and affords constant surprises of view, contains three other churches : S. Orsola and the Carmine, retaining something of original Gothic, and on a little gardened terrace, S. Giovanni Battista, with an oriental-looking dome and a hoary tower of the early Renascence.

XI

FROM RAILWAY WINDOWS

Sicily is essentially a land for railway journeys. The scenery furnishes a pleasant panorama, but is seldom of the kind that makes you feel you must get out at the next station and explore it more intimately. The leisurely pace of the trains enables you as a rule to see all you want from the passing windows ; I remember once steaming up a steep grade between Syracuse and Modica, side by side with a string of country carts, whose drivers chaffed us in choice Sicilian, which seemed always running into verse, and vociferously proposed a race.

Between Palermo and Messina, is a delightful route along the fertile northern seaboard tract. Hedges of prickly-pear, trellised with geranium, fence the line on either hand from dense orange and lemon groves, twinkling with golden fruit. Beyond these on one side is the shore, beaches of white pebble or tawny sand curving between rocky promontories ; blue sea shot with green and purple, stretches into the sheen of the horizon, in which delicately opalescent islands lift

LA CALDURA, CEFALÙ

their broad backs ; more grimly rises the furrowed cone of Stromboli, the mere tip of the great heap of lava that the volcano has piled up from the floor of the sea, a table-like mass of vapour resting above it ; white sails dot the water, high-stemmed, brightly painted boats are drawn up upon the beach near the close-packed houses of little towns and villages. On the landward side of the line the dark green of lemon groves gives way, as the ground rises, to the dusky green of olives ; the hills are sometimes softly moulded, clothed with trees or terraced for cultivation, sometimes clad with scanty herbage, and strewn with rock. From gorges between them issue puny streams that creep and trickle through broad wastes of shingle, which witness to their flood and fury when in spate. Little towns cling to the sides or are perched on the summits of the hills ; high-walled farmsteads dot the level land. A surprising amount of capital, or at any rate of time and labour, is sunk in building ; solid, comfortless-looking houses seem built to live outside of ; little plots are surrounded by high walls that one would think hypothecated their produce for a generation.

In this happily conditioned region we have an example of one of the two broadly distinguished divisions into which Sicilian land, and the relations to it of the different classes that are dependent on it, are divided. Here, and in a similar seaboard tract on the west, in the Conca d' Oro, on the northern and eastern declivities of the province of Messina, on the slopes of Etna, in some folds of the Madonian Mountains, and

in a few scattered tracts dotted here and there through the rest of the island, like oases amid squalid solitudes, we have the very paradise of small proprietors ; the land is minutely subdivided and freely marketable, owned by the cultivators, or rented on equitable terms ; cultivation is varied and intensive, vines and lemons taking the first place, vegetables for the market or the family pot crowding every spare corner, grain is altogether subsidiary, hardly anywhere does the land lie fallow or in pasture. Yet these happy conditions have not availed to prevent the depression and crises that seem the stereotyped formulæ of Sicilian economics ; in fact, they may almost be said to have brought them about. High returns from these garden properties led to a boom in land, competition bid up the price to extravagant figures, little local banks lent money freely on them ; the natural lowering of the price of produce through increased production was intensified by the restriction of the lemon market through protective tariffs in America, and of the wine market through retaliatory tariffs in France ; the little banks put up their shutters, mortgages were foreclosed, with loss to both mortgagor and mortgagee, and the most richly endowed regions in the island became centres of agrarian discontent. Happily, things are now settling down to more normal conditions.

In striking contrast to this bright coastal region, is the country we pass through by the line that runs south from Termini to Girgenti. We lose the bright-

ness and blueness of the sea, and with it the casual busy-idleness of seaside life, the varied cultivation of fondly tended little properties. The sparse signs of human habitation, the absence of trees, the hedges of piled stone, give a bareness and mournfulness even to the broad expanses of fertile land. The widely separated stations are like outposts in a wilderness. The train loiters an inordinate time at each; a few peasants enter, coming one knows not whence, a few others descend and wander away into the great solitude. Here and there a gang of men are hoeing, or a ploughman guides his share behind a yoke of cattle; the extensive cultivation shows a considerable population, whose homes are huddled in lonely little towns that gleam white on the stony hills.

Here we have an example of the agrarian conditions prevailing over by far the larger part of Sicily, the system known as *il latifondo*, a term that has acquired a sinister meaning, summing up a thousand economical, social and political evils, and enunciating a baffling problem. It connotes vast properties, primitive agriculture, wide stretches of grain alternating with fallow land and natural pasture, boggy land undrained, dry land unirrigated, the country unhealthy, often seeming for miles uninhabited, labourers divorced from the soil they till, dwelling in crowded little towns, perhaps twelve miles away from their work, hedged round with feudal customs, hampered with imposts that are ingeniously manipulated to press heavily on the poor and lightly on the rich; the average town dues on food in poverty-

stricken Sicily are about double what they are in prosperous Piedmont.

If all one hears be true the large proprietors are almost as much victims of the system, and as much hampered by traditional organization, as the labourers. Such is the crowd of middlemen and hangers-on, each making a bare living and doing very little to earn it, that the share of produce that accrues to the owner, who perhaps only goes near the property for a few weeks in the year, at one end, and the labourer, whom no law but custom and circumstance, ties like a serf to his land, and who often hardly knows him by sight, at the other, is very small.

The name of ex-fiefs, by which these large estates are sometimes known, better expresses their origin and character. They are in fact part of that heritage from the Middle Ages, by which feudal conditions are still riveted on Sicily, and so persistent is the feudal habit of mind in all classes that even those who are enslaved by it hug their chains. This, no doubt, is the explanation of well-meant legislation in 1812, 1862, and 1866 having failed to ameliorate the conditions. Legal ingenuity, aided by ignorance and an engrained conservatism on the part of the peasantry, has always defeated its intentions. Unfortunately these intentions failed, when the most splendid opportunity of effectuating them, the breaking-up of ecclesiastical estates, occurred.

After Roger had wrested Sicily from the Saracens he apportioned the land into three fairly equal parts : one he divided between the crown and the communes;

one he assigned to 'Barons of Sicily,' the redoubtable warriors whom he had led to victory ; the third he bestowed on the church. This last was largely augmented by bequest and by inheritance from barons who died without heirs. In 1866 the Italian Government stepped into the ecclesiastical shoes. Never had a state a more magnificent windfall—or, if you will, plunder—a greater opportunity, a more incumbent obligation. These vast estates had been given or bequeathed to the church in trust for the poor. It behoved the power that had dispossessed the original trustee to feel that it had succeeded to the trust. It might have held the property and made it an example of just administration and salutary agrarian conditions, of large holdings scientifically cultivated, and small holdings widely distributed ; or it might have devoted the revenue derived from sale or rental to the social, moral, and material betterment of the population. But none of these things it did. The vast reversion was broken up, sold, absorbed in adjoining properties, and the money disappeared in the general revenue of the state. Capital cannot be thus spent without a community paying for it in some way. Sicily to-day is virtually mortgaged to the value of the lands given by its first Christian lord to the guardians of the poor.

The easy-going trains enable one to have a superficial view of rural life so far as it exists in Sicily, where the only rusticity is the *rus in urbe.* Though agriculture is the vastly preponderating interest in the island, and though there are few sections of the

population far removed from some interest in the soil, there is little country life. The great proprietors live, if they can afford it, in the large cities, the labourers and middlemen in the little towns nearest to the land they are concerned with. Country houses and cottages you hardly see, but you do see comfortless shelters, large and small, where, at the seasons when agricultural work is pressing, gangs of labourers whose towns are too far from their work for them to make the journey every day, sleep through the week amid the alien corn, only returning home for Sunday. These long distances are one reason why hardly anyone is seen walking. In a country abounding in poverty it would seem that scarcely anyone is so poor that he cannot ride something, or so friendless that he cannot get a lift. The little painted carts jog slowly along, crammed often to the point of the junior members of the party having to stand. On the outskirts of the country towns long strings of men are seen riding to their work in the morning, or returning from it in the evening, often two upon one beast, their legs dangling stirrupless on either side of a saddle formed of a few folds of old cloth. The small use made of them may be the reason that feet are proverbially the unhonoured members of the Sicilian body—a thing badly done *e fatto cu li piedi*, a dull-witted fellow *pensa cu li piedi*, an ungenerous character *piglia cu li mani, e duna cu li piedi.*

Where not tilled by hand, the land is turned up by little ploughs of the simplest possible construction: a small wooden share, shod with iron, narrows and

curves up into a handle at the bend ; a pole, to which the beasts are yoked, is fixed to it by wooden pegs. It looks a plaything for a donkey, but is almost invariably drawn by two cows ; with characteristic, short-sighted economy, oxen are scarcely ever used ; an ox when not in draught would be so much capital standing idle, whereas a cow is always travailing, and besides its annual calf, gives interim dividends of work and milk. This primitive little implement is frequently the intelligent traveller's starting-point for reflections on the unprogressive character of the people, or on the land system that makes progress impossible. Certainly there is room for progress, and for improvement in the land system, but it may be questioned if, over great part of the island, either would make much change in the ploughs. It is painful to contemplate the plight in which an up-to-date plough would find itself if called on to do their work. The scene of operations is often a tiny patch of soil on a stony hill, where the animals have hardly room to turn ; the whole apparatus is carried up and down hitched by the share to the yoke that couples the two cows, the pole dragging on the ground between them ; most admirable is the manner in which the efficient, surefooted little beasts make their way up and down rocky, and often pathless, hills, under conditions that seem as unfavourable to locomotion as Siamese twinship. There are, however, no doubt, vast tracts where more efficient ploughs could be employed with advantage. The small return of grain from land which once brought

forth a hundredfold is said to be largely due to the fact that these little ploughs only scratch the surface, not uprooting weeds or turning subsoil. Harrows are hardly used, so that ploughed land is covered with solid blocks of earth, which become baked to bricks.

About half-way from Girgenti commences a dreary land, that might be a landscape in Dante's Inferno: bare, burnt hills, mottled yellow, pink and white, unlovely, seemingly unprofitable, yet garnering the most valuable mineral treasure of Sicily, the sulphur deposits that furnish four-fifths of the world's supply. This natural monopoly has no more saved the sulphur industry, than one of the most fertile soils in the world has saved agriculture, from depression and crises. When one sees the golden blocks piled on the railroad platforms and seaside wharves of Sicily, it is difficult to understand that crystalline sulphur finds a serious competitor in the apparently intractable little pyrite, yet in every country the pyrite is gradually ousting it, and reducing its price. The result is that, without hampering the mining industry to an extent that would mean its virtual extinction, it is very difficult for the state to enforce the legislation by which it has endeavoured to ameliorate the conditions of labour that must in any case be unpleasant and unhealthy.

The accounts given of the health and morality of the workers, and of the conditions of boy labour, are pitiable in the extreme, and it is not surprising to hear that the criminal class is largely recruited from them, and that they are a centre of political unrest. Sicilian

LEMON-TREES: SPRING

socialism, however, is merely economic, there is no ambition to reconstruct society from anarchic ruin, or to do dishonour to the ancient faiths. The crucifix hangs in its club-rooms, in its meetings pictures of Jesus, 'the first socialist,' are displayed side by side with portraits of Mazzini, Garibaldi and Karl Marx, and in Girgenti a Fascio de' Lavorati, or workman's union, called itself, Madonna Addolorata.

It is pleasant to be able to quote the testimony of a French writer, the Vicomte Combes de Lestrades, as to a change for the better initiated by the Anglo-Sicilian Sulphur Company. 'The results have been excellent, not only for the proprietors, but for the industry and the workmen. One may now anticipate the gradual disappearance of the barbarous conditions that have been repeatedly denounced.'

XII

GIRGENTI

Girgenti, the Akragas of the Greeks, the Agrigentum of the Romans, 'the most beautiful city of mortals,' as Pindar sang of it in the days of its prime, though sadly fallen from its old estate, is still one of the most strikingly situated towns, set in one of the loveliest regions of Sicily.

The latest born of Sikeliot cities, it was, like Selinous, the colony of a colony, having been founded by the neighbouring Gela, though the dutiful deference that the wholly independent daughter always observed toward the mother state required that official founders should be sent from Rhodes to sponsor it. Within ten years of its founding, when it might be expected that the commonwealth would be living the simple life with democratic fervour, we hear of one of those tyrants who were as a rule an expensive luxury, evolved when the political life of a city was corrupted by prosperity. The tyrant was the famous Phalaris, of the brazen bull and the spurious epistles. The revolt against his rule does not seem to have gone much

GIRGENTI FROM THE WEST

further than roasting him in his own bull, and forbidding blue clothes, that being the colour in which he clad his bodyguard; then the liberated commonwealth settled down to money-making and enjoying life under absolute government. The trade in wheat and oil between Southern Sicily and Carthage fell mainly into its hands. The part it bore in the great Hellenic triumph at Himera placed at its disposal, according to the merciless code of the times, an enormous amount of slave labour, which made Akragas the most splendid and well-appointed city of its day; the sumptuous and ostentatious life of the inhabitants became a byword, there was the extravagant devotion to sport frequent in a decadent society, and easily gotten wealth brought its natural nemesis.

Then was commenced the fringe of superb temples on the south, the glory of the city in its prime, and still, in their ruin, its main attraction. Along the whole length of the lower boundary they stand, on the edge of splintered cliff, looking across the plain to the sea that lay between the city and the secular foes of the race. Alas for the faith that dwells in temples made with hands while the spirit waxes faint. In the day of vengeance, when the Carthaginian came in his might, not Zeus nor Here, nor all the company of heaven, availed to save the people whose heart and whose leaders failed them while still their wall stood strong and their gates unbroken. At the bidding of their borrowed Spartan general, the whole able-bodied population marched out in the night to Gela, leaving the

aged and infirm to be butchered with nameless cruelties by the astonished barbarians, when they entered the beautiful, forsaken city in the morning.

The city has dragged on an inglorious existence from that shameful abandonment to the present day, gradually shrinking to its earliest limits on the north-western eminence of the great hill, subject now to Carthage, now to Syracuse, taken and retaken by Rome and Carthage in the Punic wars. The Saracens settled there an unruly colony of Berbers, a barbarian ancestry which those versed in such matters think can still be traced in the present population, who are among the most graceless in Sicily ; the reports in the agrarian inquiry instituted by Parliament in 1884 describe in the province of Girgenti a hideous and shameless immorality, condoned by public opinion.

In 1086, Roger the Norman took the city, and four years after S. Gerlandus came as its first bishop, and planted his cathedral on the foundations of a temple of the half barbarian Zeus Atabyrios, where perhaps there had already been a Christian church, and afterwards a Mohammedan mosque. In the eleventh century this first cathedral was superseded by another, raised on the lofty rock of the Akropolis, of which unfortunately little is left, beyond the two courses of beautiful Arabo-Norman arches and the window above them in the weather-worn belfry. The gateway of the ruined chapel of San Giorgio, with dog-tooth and triple chevron mouldings and acanthus foliage, is an exquisite example of Sicilian Gothic.

The vast area enclosed by the ancient city is now seamed by watercourses, and covered with miscellaneous cultivation, amid which lie scattered numerous remains, of streets and buildings. Along the southern bound ran a veritable *via sacra* more than a mile in length, in which stood at least six temples. The first on the east was a peripteral hexastyle ; of its thirty-four columns twenty-five remain, those on the northern side still supporting the entablature ; the lower parts of the remaining nine have been found and placed in position ; the stump of the pedestal on which stood the statue of the divinity is still in the naos.

The columns have a height just short of five diameters. Their delicate entasis, the double necking of the capitals, and the graceful curves of the echinos, give them a rare distinction, which is enhanced by the magnificent site of the building. This is best seen by descending below the cliff, and looking up to the superb ruin set on the topmost crest of the long southern escarpment, which has been fretted and moulded by the weather into the semblance of a huge, hand-wrought pedestal for the great shrine that is built out of the same tawny stone. One realizes then how subtly Greek art allied itself with nature. A modern builder would have commenced by planing the rock into a platform, but it needs only a glance to see how much the noble building gains by this having been left in its native rude inequality.

The ruins, no doubt, owe much of their present charm to the worn and crumbling surface of the warm-

tinted stone, which in the sunshine seems lit to gold. From a builder's point of view it is probably one of the worst stones imaginable, compacted on some ancient shore, of sand and the innumerable creatures of the sea whose shells, teeth, and bones are still embedded in it. Carbonic acid in the atmosphere, corroding the lime in these, has fretted and pitted the surface into a picturesqueness that a more durable material could hardly have had. A curious effect results from the stone having been often cut at an angle to its stratification, giving the look of a diagonal pattern to flat surfaces, and of a spiral to columns. In rich and mellow colouring the buildings could never have been as beautiful as now. There can be no doubt that whether from a reminiscence of the marble fanes of the mother Hellas, or from the feeling that the friable stone needed some protection against the moist sea winds, the whole structure was covered with white stucco of fine marble dust, which was decorated with designs in colour. It requires a very robust faith in the unerring instinct of Greek art to believe that the edifices could then have had the air of serene and simple majesty that characterizes them now.

The half-mile between this and the next temple can be made very interesting, by leaving the road and walking along the line of the old city wall, which here was carved out of the native rock occasionally strengthened with masonry. In later times it has been hollowed for sepulchres, which can only have been made after the wall had ceased to have any importance

THE TEMPLE OF CONCORD, GIRGENTI,
FROM S. NICOLA

to the shrunken city. Earthquake, or the slow sapping of air and moisture, has played wild havoc with them ; huge honeycombed masses lie on the slope below, or are hitched on the splintered crags, while sometimes we can walk a considerable distance on the planed rock, in which are sunken sepulchres filled with rain-water, or with ferns and wild flowers.

We now come to what is known as the temple of Concord, which, with the possible exception of the Theseion at Athens, which it resembles, is the most perfect Doric temple in existence, probably owing its preservation to its having been used as a Christian church. It is most fortunate that this well-preserved specimen should belong to the culminating period of Hellenic architecture. It is a peripteral hexastyle, in type very similar to that last described, the columns a little higher in proportion to their diameter, indicating a somewhat later and better date. Those in the centre of the two ends are more massive than their fellows, and also those that stand second on the two sides, one of the many subtle adaptations to the subjectivity of the beholder that give to Doric architecture of the best period its incommunicable serenity, and the air of inevitableness which Wordsworth laid down as a note of great poetry, which is, indeed, a note of all great art ; it seems the completion and the complement of its site and setting, the supreme and sympathetic touch of human art to the long elaborated artistry of nature. And, fanciful though it may sound, nature appears to have responded

to the men who knew her; the temple must have stood for most of its four-and-twenty centuries when those grey-boled olives that raise their cloudy foliage around were saplings, before the first congeners of those bands of prickly-pear that stand stretching hapless arms, like the perplexed chorus of a Greek drama, had been brought across the Atlantic; yet each and all, and the strewn and splintered rocks, and the spread splendour of wild flowers, seem the inevitable framing for which it was destined.

As in the last temple, two stairways on opposite corners of the pronaos mount to the top—where I am writing now, and than which I know no pleasanter place to dream away a sunny hour, couched in some nook of the hoary stone, undulating fields and folded woods around, the yellow city set upon the heights above, blue sea sparkling in the bay and blue sky arching overhead, the air alive with singing birds.

The building has been styled the temple of Concord from a tablet found there of much later date, but the name seems a happy accident. When Christianity came, the edifice qualified for it by giving shelter to the new faith, which, through a concordat of many hundred years, used it as a church dedicated to St. Gregory of the Turnips, to whom we owe an inexpressible debt for having kept, not only the vegetables of his humble votaries, but this unique example of ancient art, under his ægis during the rude ages when every unused building was looked upon as a legitimate quarry. The shrinking of the town towards

GIRGENTI FROM THE GARDEN OF
S. NICOLA

its earlier limits on the upper part of the hill, was probably the cause of Christian church and pagan temple falling into disuse. Now, void and lone, more lovely in decay than it could ever have been in its prime, touched by elemental forces through a score of centuries into a beauty of crumbled surface and broken line and sunny hue that no chisel or pigment could have given, it is slowly mouldering into the eternal concord 'that keeps the keys of all the creeds.'

Near this are some catacombs, and then a rounded sandy hill, on which a solitary column rises above the chaotic and unfortunately scanty ruins of the interesting temple of Herakles, which even in the last half-century have been laid under contribution for the breakwater of Porto Empedocle. It was a peripteral hexastyle of forty-two columns, of which the archaic style indicates a much earlier date than that of the last two.

The temple contained a bronze statue of Herakles, of which the beauty is extolled by Cicero, and excited the cupidity of Verres, whose attempts to carry it off were frustrated by the devotion of the people. Here, too, were the paintings by Zeuxis of Alkmene, and the infant Herakles strangling the serpents, which the artist esteemed above price, and gave to the temple for which the citizens wished to purchase it; a fine example of the proud self-appreciation of a great master.

After passing a gap in the cliff, which marks the position of the ancient Golden Gate, through which a

road led down to the emporium and little port to which Akragas owed so much of her wealth, we find the remains of the temple of Zeus, which was commenced after the battle of Himera, and was still unfinished at the fall of the city, seventy years later. There had been a temple on the Akropolis for Zeus Atabyrios, who had come by way of Rhodes to the hill of Akragas from his ancient haunt on Mount Tabor, and was probably only Moloch in decent Hellenic guise. This thank-offering raised by captive Canaanitish hands in honour of the great Hellenic triumph was to the unquestioned king of gods and men, who had his dwelling on Olympos, and the venerable deity in the little ancient town above was relegated to local rank as Zeus of the city. We cannot tell how these things are looked at by the immortals ; the Zeus of the Greek poets is not a personage of very refined tastes, but one cannot help thinking he would have been more at home in the hoary temple on the hill, while the vast, meaningless pile would certainly have befitted his half-barbarian compeer. Whether from some barbarian strain, or because their artistic sense had been blunted by luxury and extravagance, the Akragantines appear in projecting it to have been beset by a vulgar megalomania quite alien to the restrained and balanced temper of Greek art.

Technically it is a pseudo-peripteral heptastyle, that is it had seven columns at each end, and at the sides the appearance of a walled-up peristyle. The builders had undertaken an order on a scale so wholly beyond

SPRING DAY IN A VALLEY NEAR
GIRGENTI

the previous experience of their craft, that they could not trust the pillars with their superincumbent entablature to stand free. So, as Diodoros explains, 'the columns were built up in the same mass with the walls, rounded externally, but with a flat face towards the interior of the temple.' But its unmanageable hugeness was its least fault. The colossal temple at Selinous, though in many respects an example of o'ervaulting ambition, and though obliged, from its exceeding the proportions for which the canons of Doric architecture had been so carefully and cautiously elaborated, to have recourse to many of the disfiguring structural expedients that have been resorted to here, has yet, so far as these allow, respected the traditional form and aspect of a Doric temple. There was probably little in it to outrage the artistic sense of a Greek community. But we can hardly imagine Iktinos or Kallikrates beholding this clumsy pile without amusement or scorn at what they would perhaps have considered vulgar colonial taste.

One of the most grotesque features were the thirty-eight colossal telamones. Much has been written as to the exact place where they disfigured the edifice, whether on pilasters inside, against the flat interior face of the columns, or on a ledge between the columns outside. One of these ungainly giants has been pieced together, all but the feet, by Signor Raffaeli Politi, and is seen lying prone, twenty-five feet in length, with locked lips and eyeless sockets, abnormally brawny arms and throat, huge loins and paunch springing

from puny calves and ankles. The monstrous abortion seems the negation of all that Greek art has to teach us of noble bearing, and delicate and reasoned beauty.

To the north-west of this is a lovely piece of reconstruction, due to the enthusiasm of Signor Cavillari, known as the temple of Castor and Pollux : four Doric columns supporting a corner of pediment and entablature. It is said to be composed of fragments from at least two different buildings, and purists criticize the combination ; but it is beautiful—set in a nook of the lovely slope, where twisted almond trees toss their boughs and spread their blossom, and multitudinous ruin lies half enearthed amid iris and asphodel. Very delicately effective is the carving of the cornice ; even the stucco and colouring, of which a good deal remains, have been so mellowed by time as to be pleasing, though one does not like to think that the buildings in their prime were garish with white and crimson.

The depression to the north-west of this—now filled by a luxuriant lemon grove—is supposed to mark the site of the ancient artificial lake mentioned by Diodoros as one of the wonders, and the great delight, of the pleasure-loving city. On the other side of this, where the ancient wall overhung the ravine of the Hypsas, two shattered Doric columns, standing among vines and fruit trees, mark the site of a peripteral hexastyle temple, usually assigned, but, I fancy, without any definite ground, to Hephaistos. From it we obtain

a beautiful view of the range of ruined shrines along the southern bound of the city.

One of the pleasantest spots in the neighbourhood of Girgenti are the grounds and dilapidated buildings of the disused convent of S. Nicola, lying between the town and the southern temples, nearly in the centre of the site of the ancient city. The chapel must date from Norman times, and embodies a structure much more ancient. The building within the convent enclosure, known by the singular name of the Oratory of Phalaris, preserves up to the triglyphs of the frieze a small temple of the Roman period, which was converted into a Christian chapel.

The irregularly cultivated grounds of the old convent are very delightful; huge stone-pines raise ruddy columns, and spread their sombre vaulting across the filtering sunshine; here and there a cypress, like a spire of solid shade, tapers upward into the blue; pergolas of vines or roses stretch between rows of stone pillars, aisles of orange trees suspend their golden clusters, great fragments of ruin stand or lie, draped in ivy, honeysuckle or eglantine. Everywhere are interesting architectural remains: a few relics of the Gothic cloisters still exist, and on the top of what looks a huge bastion of the terrace, but is really the containing wall of a great cistern, is a very fine and massive Corinthian cornice of white marble. The views in all directions from the terrace are exceedingly lovely.

The old port of Akragas was the mouth of the two little rivers, which after almost encircling the city met

shortly before reaching the sea. In the open and stony beach, it was the one break that gave any shelter for shipping, but it must have been the poorest of harbours, and when ships increased in size, it was necessarily abandoned. The ruins of the temple of Zeus, the greater part of which appears to have been standing at the commencement of the fifteenth century, were requisitioned for constructing the artificial harbour on the north-west, now called Porto Empedocle, in honour of the most famous citizen of Akragas, with whose name the myth-mongers have been so busy that we should hardly know whether he were a universal genius, or a crazy charlatan, if Lucretius had not sung of him as the greatest of the great gifts of Sicily to the world.

BADIA VECCHIA, TAORMINA

XIII

FUIT MESSINA

How shall I find the heart to write of Messina, la Nobile, the beautiful city of the straits, seated on her deep and spacious haven, at the point of Sicily that is nearest the mainland, so near, indeed, that the blue riband of water seems less to sunder island from continent than to link the Tyrrhenian to the Ionian Sea. There she has been through untold time, perhaps the oldest habitation of man upon the island, perhaps, on the other hand, according to our latest teachers, the point from which these old inhabitants crossed to Europe to be a strand in the mingled population whose children were to rule the world. On this sheltered shore these earliest comers to Sicily, or these first emigrants from it, moored their rafts or beached their coracles, and dwelt in a cluster of rude huts by the quiet water, their faces set, in prospect or in retrospect, towards Italy, to which Sicily seems here stretching out an arm of land that enfolds a deep broad space of sea, as though inviting passage across. Here, in any case, was a Sikel town called, they say, Zankle, from

the sickle-like curve that makes the harbour. Greek corsairs sacked it and settled it; then came a regularly constituted Hellenic colony, and founded a state with due forms of law and meet honours to the gods, which they named after Messene in the mother Hellas.

With that superb harbour in front, and backlands of great fertility, Messana, as the name came to be pronounced in Sicily, could not but grow and prosper. Its close connection with the continent has always given it an aloofness from the other city-states of the island, nor did it ever rise to the commanding importance of some of them; yet, its position made it always a power to be reckoned with, and twice, at least, the struggle for its possession had a prominent place in the secular strife which, like an ensanguined and persistent warp, underlies the changing weft of Sicilian history. In 281 B.C., the Mamertines, the lawless mercenaries of Agathokles, seized it by a ruse, held it against Pyrrhos, were ousted from the citadel by the Carthaginians, called in Roman aid, and brought on the first Punic war. Again, in 1038, after the Saracens had held it for a couple of centuries, it was captured by Robert Wiscard and became the pivot of the Normans in the long and obstinate struggle that redeemed Sicily from the Paynim.

Built in an earthquake region, on the treacherous line of contact between primary and recent formations, Messina has often had grim reminders, that for the sake of that splendid and happily placed harbour, she had given herself a hostage to uncontrollable and incal-

culable forces. So fully did she recognize this, that in local parlance earthquake was referred to as '*il paesano*,' which in Sicily, a country of towns, signifies fellow townsman. It had, as it were, the freedom of the city, lurking there as a familiar spirit that might at any moment break out in demoniac fury. In 1783 it shook half of the houses into ruin, and for a generation or more the citizens built in prudent recognition of their terrible associate. Then, little by little, the awful presence was disregarded, and Messina became once more a town of high and crowded houses. In 1894, and again in 1907, she was rudely, but vainly, warned. Holding her life in her hand, unheeding and unafraid, she kept on her strenuous course of gay and busy money-making. Then came the end. Between four and five o'clock on the 28th of December, 1908, in the dark hours of the winter morning, repeated shocks shook the whole city into heaps of ruin, in which great part of the inhabitants were entombed. History has no record of such complete and appalling destruction.

The story of that immense catastrophe is too recent, and was too deeply impressed on the imagination of mankind, to need repetition here. Everyone remembers the thrill of horror that the telegraphic news sent round the earth, uniting all its peoples in a passion of pitiful charity. One touch of nature—a rude, ruthless, shattering touch—had made the whole world kin. At first it was hoped the reports might prove exaggerated, but it was soon evident that the half had not

been told us, for, as with a supreme touch of remorselessness, the convulsion had broken communication by rail and wire between the devastated areas and the outer world. Almost hour by hour the death roll swelled, and the tale of destruction grew longer and more lamentable. Then, as help pressed from all quarters into the stricken district, came harrowing details of the vast charnel-house into which one of the fairest regions of the earth had been transformed, of whole populations crushed out of existence in their sleep, or struck down by falling masonry, or clutched by it in living torture ; of human beings maimed, dismembered, mangled, as they fled wild and naked from their falling homes, imprisoned by flames in tottering upper rooms, hurled down in the furrowed streets by driving storm, engulfed by inrushing and receding waves ; for earth, fire, air and water seemed banded in demoniac riot, on the devoted city. The epicentre of the disturbance was in the straits, and the upheaval of the sea bottom sent a huge wave inland, which, as it swung back, sucked everything movable with it. This, and a storm that swept over the region, made the lower streets knee deep in mud, hiding scattered ruin and tangled wire, amid which the fugitives stumbled in darkness, or in the glare of conflagration kindled by ignited gas from the broken pipes.

Three weeks before, I had spent a few hours at Messina, had strolled along the stately Marina, thronged with busy crowds, and fringed with swaying ships, wandered to the cathedral and enjoyed, once more, the

mellowed tints and quaint delicate carving of the west front, with the wonderful doorway that was 'fit to be a portal of paradise,' had loitered within, over the billowy marble pavement, which seemed the register of old earth-waves, by the granite columns, said to have once stood in a neighbouring temple of Poseidon, that uplifted their huge bulk towards the painted timber roof whose rich, deep tones spanned the shadows far above ; had seen the fabulously costly altar of marble and precious stone, that time and dirt had drawn into a harmony of many colours, not quite so artistically despicable as the guide books would have us think. Often had the great church been mishandled by flame, earthquake and besotted human renovation, but it still stood—marred, disfigured and neglected—an imposing monument of Messina's stormy and chequered history. The charred bases of Poseidon's columns bore witness to the fire that had broken out when in 1254 the Emperor Conrad IV.'s remains were being consigned with solemn pomp to the crimson chest that still held them, high up in an arch of the choir ; the tasteless Renascence arcading and meaningless stucco ornaments that had replaced the pointed Siculo-Norman arches and mosaics of the nave testified to the rebuilding necessitated by the earthquake of 1783.

I next saw the cathedral in shapeless and hopeless ruin, from which it was impossible that it should ever rise except as an entirely new church. In a few seconds of petulant devilry, the earth had shaken to pieces the patient labour of many generations,

the accumulated result of the art and devotion of centuries. The beautiful marble façade was shattered and cast far into the square, fragments of sculpture and statuary, spiral columns, delicately foliaged capitals, cunningly wrought reliefs, heads and limbs of strange beasts, and solemn faces of the saints, obtruded from chaotic heaps of masonry ; the massive columns of the old sea-god's temple lay in broken pieces about the nave, beneath huge splinters of the beautiful timber roof. It was startling to see one thing uplifted and untouched amid the universal ruin. At the east end of the church stood the half dome of the apse, with tattered edge, and looking as though a breath would bring it down, but still raising aloft and unharmed the colossal mosaic of Christ in the attitude of benediction, characteristic of the Siculo-Norman churches. There it stood, gazing on the wreckage of its temple, with the same unmoved expression, with which for eight centuries it had looked down on crowded worshippers, as if to say : Though our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands.

This too seemed the evangel of a mound of rubble at the other end of the town—one of the most completely destroyed houses in that great destruction—which I had known as a bright, happy home, open to all the English of every class living in Messina or passing through.

Charles Bousfield Huleatt, who had been English chaplain at Messina since 1901, was one of those men

of transparent goodness and abounding human brotherhood, who are worth even more to the world by what they are than by anything they may do, though he was the soul of every good work and wholesome influence in the English community from the church to the football and chess clubs. His wife was like-minded, and they and their four charming children made a home that more than most I have known realized the ideal of plain living and high thinking. Though possessed of ample means, they lived simply and spent their substance and themselves in furthering good causes not only in Messina, but all along the eastern coast of Sicily. The Sailors' Rest at Syracuse, which under Mr. and Mrs. Greig was doing excellent work among the English shipping, and at the same time providing a homely and wholesome resort for sailors ashore, but which I have lately heard with great regret has been closed for want of funds, was founded and mainly maintained by him.

Buried in the ruins of their home lay all that was mortal of this good and happy family, but of this we were not assured till some time later. To endeavour to find some trace of them was the sad quest that took me to Messina.

I was given a passage in the cruiser 'Sutlej,' which had been the first ship to bring help to the ruined city, had come thence to Syracuse laden with fugitives and wounded, and was returning on the same mission of mercy. We steamed into the noble harbour in the dull dawn of the new year, four days after the fatal

morning. At the first distant view across the harbour, in the grey half-light, one hardly realized the complete destruction, for the front walls of the line of palatial buildings that fringed the long Marina, and gave Messina its characteristic appearance of stately and solid prosperity, were for the most part still standing. As we drew near, however, it was apparent that they did but mask the wreck, not only of the buildings they belonged to, but of the city that had stretched up to the hills behind ; where white walls and gleaming panes had been wont to throw back the first light of day, hung a pall of grey smoke and dun dust, lit here and there by the sullen glare of smouldering fires.

The scene on landing baffled description : widespread ruin, exhibiting every variety of freakish havoc ; some buildings mere heaps of wreckage, others ragged, riven, tilted, seeming to lurch and stagger like drunken men. Often the front wall alone stood, appearing as though a touch would bring it down, but in one or two houses this only had fallen, leaving the interior, with its furniture and all the numberless articles of use and ornament that make up a home, exposed as in a doll's house. Sometimes the shell of a house was standing, the interior—half a dozen flats perhaps—and the roof, had telescoped down to the ground. A German lady told me that she had fallen with the top floor of a high building through successive stories, expecting every moment to be her last, and in the end arrived at the bottom, intact, though covered with bruises. The fre-

quent cords, or ropes of knotted sheets, hanging from balconies and upper windows, recorded that in houses whose front showed little injury the stairs must have collapsed or been blocked, and egress below prevented. To rush to the balcony is said to have been one of the local traditions for procedure in earthquake, but in this terrible convulsion the refuge often proved a death-trap. Hanging from a balcony of wrenched and twisted iron was the body of a girl pinned by a beam that had fallen across it, her head hanging down, her hair waving in the wind, one hand clutching the rail, the other dangling in the air. Behind, with front wall fallen away, was the wreck of the room in which she had slept, a dainty, pink-papered little room with pictures on the walls, a bright brass bed and lacquered white furniture. In another place a woman was clutched by the neck in an entanglement of rafters hitched in a tottering wall, so ready to fall that no attempt could be made to take the piteous thing down for burial, yet standing on, like a brutal gibbet, in spite of storm and earthquake. Another local injunction in case of earthquake was to stand in a doorway—poor Huleatt, I remember, thus instructed his household—but all these maxims contemplated less ruinous shocks. I heard of a man and his wife who for some time thus stood in a doorway on a trembling third floor; all attempts to get them down were in vain, till the house fell and buried them.

Some streets were a continuous ridge of fallen masonry, metal and wood-work; in others the ruins

lay in scattered mounds, with ghastly shells or fragments of houses between them. It was curious how generally the apse alone of a church was standing, often with the altar-piece unharmed; the altar was usually buried under a slope of ruin. A singular irony on human precaution was afforded by the one, out of the numberless churches in Messina, that escaped unscathed, S. Andrea Avellino, which, about a year before, had been closed to public worship, as unsafe in the event of earthquake.

The odour of death was in the air; despite the strenuous work of four days, corpses still lay scattered; here and there a human limb protruded from the ruin, or part of a body, the rest of which lay crushed to jelly beneath a mass of masonry. But more intolerable than the most harrowing scenes, was the thought of that which we did not see, the certainty that under those long dunes of ruin from which every hour human beings were being dug out, were those that the most devoted and strenuous efforts could never reach. There they were, listening, perhaps, to the tread of our feet and the sound of our voices; some shut round as in a mould, their limbs bound and their mouths gagged with crumbled mortar, able to give no sign that they were near to those who were anxiously seeking them; others free and unhurt, listening in the prison that was to be their tomb to the tumultuous life above, to the shouts that were eagerly invoking some sign of their whereabouts, but hearing their own answering cry lost in the heterogeneous pile above. There

they were, and there they would remain; not the labours of an army corps, led by their own king, nor the fleets of half the world, nor the impatient pity and the poured-out wealth of the nations, would avail to save them. Slowly, in hunger and thirst, a prey to the sickness of hope deferred, to despair, illusion, madness, their lives would ebb away. Sadder than the most mutilated forms, were the corpses found in the weeks to come, unwounded and with no mark of harm, nor shut away from vital air. The mental torture often suffered could be judged from those who survived till they were rescued. One day a little boy walked into my wife's workroom, and in a matter-of-fact way told his mother, who was sewing there, that news had come of her brother having been found in a buried room, where he had been imprisoned fourteen days ; he was raving mad, one of his children alive in his arms, two others dead beside him. One poor girl was buried twelve days under the decaying bodies of her father and mother, pecked at all the while by some famishing poultry, cooped in a hollow beside her. Often there was a merciful numbing of the mental and bodily faculties ; days seem to have been passed without reflection, nor any sense of pain or of the lapse of time. There were striking illustrations of the power of endurance possessed by the human frame, and this was, on the whole, more marked among women than men. One example of this was very touching : a man and his wife, with a child at the breast, were buried in a basement room ; the baby died,

and the woman suckled her husband, and when, after six days' imprisonment, they were liberated, she was less exhausted than he, and passed on to him the first drink of water that was brought to her. She was a spare, large-boned woman, with a strong, serious face. The husband was altogether of a weaker type, his dazed, livid face appearing more cadaverous from a thick, recent growth of black beard.

Often the eager seekers had to stand baffled and helpless spectators of the slow agony that they could do nothing to relieve. A Waldensian pastor, Adolfo Chauvie, one of their most eloquent preachers, lived for four days entangled among beams and débris, from which it was impossible to extricate him ; an attached servant watched by him till he died. Sometimes liquid nourishment was conveyed in a pipe through the superincumbent ruins to those whose whereabouts had been discovered, and thus they were kept alive till they could be got at. Those who did not see the conditions on the spot, nor realize the ineffectiveness of the tools and equipment with which sailors and soldiers had to deal with a state of things wholly unprecedented and unprepared for, found it hard to understand the slow progress, the small results and frequent failure, of all that strenuous and devoted effort. The compacted mass of masonry, metal, boards, wire, cloth, all the medley that makes and furnishes a house, formed most intractable stuff to tackle with pick and spade. The greatest care was necessary not to precipitate the fall of tottering walls, or the slide of perched masses

of masonry. A false or hasty move might bring down tons of rubble on the rescuers and those they were trying to save.

Many, no doubt, were slowly roasted to death by the smouldering fire that crept along the mounded ruin, kindling with its cruel breath everything inflammable ; the heart sickened at the significant smell that was often in the air. It was horrible to think of this subtle enemy which, while they worked and while they slept, was stealing its persistent march upon the rescuers.

In the quiet of the night, military patrols made the round of the city, listening for any sound that might give indication of life beneath the heaps of ruin. Sometimes the sounds were very strange. On one occasion a rescue party were attracted by muffled cries, as from an agonized and maddened human being, cooped under a mound of rubble, and after prolonged labour, found a donkey imprisoned in a buried stable with two less vociferous horses. The so-called dumb creation were the cause of several rescues. A dog, who was entombed with a family of four, scratched a little tunnel towards the outer air, far enough for his cries to be heard by a working party, who excavated him and his owners. From one mound some Italian soldiers heard a cracked voice calling 'Maria, Maria.' They shouted in return, and getting no answer but the reiterated 'Maria,' dug in the direction of the voice ; at last, through a small opening, there crawled out a bedraggled, dusty little parrot, who blinked complacently round, and remarked

'Maria.' Carefully and cautiously the men worked on, and arrived at one of those haphazard caves which so often occurred in the midst of a crumbled building. Here was a little girl who proved to be Maria; she said her brothers were somewhere near, for they had talked together since the house fell, but for some time they had been silent. Again the soldiers set to work, and found two little boys, exhausted but alive.

A story told of a lady who owed her life to her parrot seems to support the opinion, universal among the inhabitants of earthquake regions, that animals have some subtle premonition of the convulsions. She was staying in the Hotel Trinacria, and, half an hour before the catastrophe, was awakened by the cries and fluttering of her parrot. Finding it impossible to quiet it, or to sleep herself, she got up and dressed, and was thus able to go out at the first shock, before the fall of the hotel crushed, with one or two exceptions, everyone in it.

The little camps of houseless survivors afforded striking illustration of the easy content and irrepressible cheerfulness of these happy southern populations; sunshine has entered into their souls and cannot long be clouded. From woodwork of fallen houses, rough shelters for sleeping under had been constructed; in front would be a fire, where the women were cooking a meal of such eatables as could be got, and the men warmed themselves and chatted; children were playing round with an undreamt-of wealth of odds and ends gleaned from the neighbouring ruins. The clothing

was of the most fortuitous description. Sicilians of the humbler classes sleep naked, and it was in this state that the majority of those who escaped found themselves in the streets, glad of any covering they could lay their hands on.

Of course there were pathetic exceptions to this careless happiness: people unable to tear themselves from the heaps where all their goods and perhaps all they loved were buried, sitting dazed and horror-bound, or seeking every clue, listening to every sound, that might give indications of life still existing beneath. One case I heard of was very pitiful: the wife of an Italian officer, a woman noted for her beauty, who wandered, barely clad, over the ragged mound that had been her house, nursing the severed head of her baby, crooning cradle songs to it, and coaxing it to speak with childish terms of endearment. Nothing would induce her to give up her ghastly plaything, or be clothed, or led away from her ruined home.

Where nature had done her worst, man was seen at his best, and it was the men who had been banded and trained to slay their fellows—Italian soldiers and the sailors of nearly every nation under heaven—who exemplified this. The agility, readiness and resource of the bluejackets made them just what was wanted in the circumstances. One shuddered to think what the unfortunate population would have done without them. Everything they needed was destroyed or buried. Messina itself could hardly have supplied a ladder, shovel or stretcher, not a drink of water nor a biscuit,

and the great warships proved universal providers, and gave themselves up to the work of mercy as though they had been manned and commissioned for nothing else. There seemed a divine irony in these grim monsters of the deep, bristling with diabolically ingenious contrivances for dealing death and destruction, being devoted without reserve, and with infinite kindness, versatility, and resource, to the saving of life and the succour of distress. It was as though Lucifer should become a ministering angel. One could not but ask oneself whether it would always need ruin and suffering to evoke the human brotherhood that underlies our differences and rivalries ; but if ever swords are beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, I trust that navies will still patrol the seas on the missions of mercy, in which they are already more often engaged than in war.

It may have been partly because two of the heavily-manned Russian cruisers were always on the spot, while a third was transporting fugitives and wounded, that the big, kind, silent Russian sailors became to the distracted population the type of the help that came to them from the sea. The people knelt in the streets as the Russian working parties passed, and the newspapers were never tired of proposing medals, statues, and I know not what fantastic schemes, in their honour. For a generation to come the Russian sailor will be to the Sicilian populace the personification of beneficent strength.

The splendid manner in which the king and queen

maintained the traditions of fearless service hereditary in the house of Savoy laid new foundations for the dynasty in the affection and imagination of the people. With an ascendancy that his subjects had not, I think, hitherto credited him with, the king on his arrival exercised an authority, assumed a responsibility, displayed a decision and promptitude, that before anything else were needed among officials whose weakness is a fear of initiation and a love of red tape. Of the single-hearted devotion and business-like efficiency with which the heroic and beautiful queen organized and supervised all work that can fall to women, no one who was there can speak with adequate enthusiasm. From morning until evening, with a short interval for rest and food at midday, she was on board the ironclad that bore her name, and that under her personal direction had been transformed into a hospital ship, working with infinite sympathy and charm among the wounded and the dying, often assisting the surgeons in harrowing operations, never asserting her royal prerogative but to waive aside senseless forms and impediments. 'La nostra Santa,' the sailors called her, and never has popular canonization been more worthily bestowed.

It was sad that the most eminent Italian figure was conspicuously absent. If it be true, as was alleged, and as can well be believed, that Pius X. was earnestly desirous of going to the scene of suffering, but was prevented by his official advisers, who are virtually his custodians, the papacy lost an opportunity of binding Italian hearts to it as no claims or decretals have ever done.

Sicily

In a striking scene in his famous romance, Fogazzaro represents 'the Saint' on his knees urging a devout and well-intentioned Pope to issue from the Vatican, and to let his first visit be to Lazarus—Lazarus who every day was suffering and dying near to him, and whose cry of misery was the call of Christ. Two years after the words were written, a unique occasion occurred for acting on them. Here was a lazar-house such as the world had never seen, and on which the eyes of all the world were bent in anxious compassion, the suffering and the dying strewn thick over miles of ruined habitation, and—as in the saint's adaptation of the Gospel apologue—the power that made no profession of service was found doing the Master's work, while the punctilious 'servus servorum' sulked in self-imposed impotence. The king led the work of rescue and relief; the queen wore herself ill in manifold ministration; the Pope subscribed money, and telegraphed his blessing.

One can well believe that to none was this failure to respond to a great opportunity a keener grief than to the warm-hearted and simple-minded Giuseppe Santo, who, five years before, when taking leave of his mourning flock on the railway platform at Venice, is said to have shown them his return ticket as a pledge of *nolo pontificari*. Undoubtedly he did so in all good faith, but that return ticket was never used; in a few weeks he had become Pius X., the nominee of the Jesuits and their triple-crowned slave, condemned for the rest of his life to the most splendid prison of the

world. Since he was not allowed to leave it to go to Messina, there is scant chance of his ever escaping. Yet all Italy would welcome him as the sponsor of her new-born nationhood, and the head of a vaster dominion than the petty temporalities after which papal policy vainly hankers. One cannot help thinking that the chance encounter among the busy ambulances at Messina of three persons so sincere, so devoted to duty, and in their different ways so admirable, as the Pope, the king and the queen, might have given a new trend to Italian history. But the sinister power that has possessed itself of the pontifical machinery willed otherwise. The Holy Father is indeed a prisoner in the Vatican, but his gaolers are not the Italian Government but the Curia.

In the two years that have passed since her fall, Messina has been answering the question that so exercised the Italian press at the time, and is gradually rising again. Indeed, it was never doubtful that she would do so. A thousand ties of interest, association, affection, combat the sapient bystanding advice: 'Heu, fuge crudeles terras, fuge litus avarum.' No warning will prevent a city rising by that splendid harbour, at the point of Sicily nearest to the mainland. It is to be hoped, however, that the resurrection body will be very different to that which has been so rudely laid to rest. That vanished Messina was an object-lesson of what a city should not be in an earthquake region; most of the many-storied houses were built of unhewn stone, mortared together into thick friable

walls. The rooms and passages were mainly ceiled with false vaulting of cement on a framework of reeds, that cracked and fell in chunks when shaken.

Here and there were object-lessons in the other direction. An Englishman took me to his house, which stood in a garden just outside the town, a building of one story, which, with the exception of a few fissures, was quite unharmed, though, beyond its slight altitude and its isolation, it had none of the architectural contrivances that the experience of earthquakes has suggested. With the aid of such experience, science could no doubt design a city that would be almost immune from earthquake, and from the fires that usually accompany it. At Messina, the spreading out of the inhabited area, entailed by the houses being low and the streets wide, would have the incidental advantage of extending the city to the crystalline rock, which offers far better foundation than the ill-compacted tertiary formations that lie above it in the narrow strip between the hills and the sea. Of course no prudential considerations will prevent the proprietor of a few square yards in a city from piling all the building he can upon it. A counsel of perfection would seem to be for the government to acquire the whole area, and either build itself, or let it under stringent building conditions.

XIV

TAORMINA

Taormina is pleasantly situated on a hill, some 600 feet above Giardini, its railway station, which is by the sea-side. Behind is a ridge of rock, a notch in the northern end of which is filled with the rosy ruin of the theatre. On a spur of hill at the other end, the Grand Hotel, S. Domenico, an old monastery with very picturesque and interesting features, flaunts its name in gigantic, funereal letters running the whole length of its white-washed parapet ; the hideous label continually obtrudes itself as a feature of the landscape. Travellers who love the old-world charm that is the great attraction of Sicily, and that, alas, is fast vanishing from Taormina, would do well to boycott the establishment till the atrocious advertisement is removed.

The town consists of a long street, with short lanes branching up and down from it, often very picturesque, as may be seen from the sketches. The picturesque features in the main street are rapidly being replaced by modern shop-fronts, mostly those of antiquity dealers, whose seductive wares are reduced by competition to

extraordinarily moderate figures, though, of course, the ultimate prices are only arrived at after exhaustive discussion, and all business is on the basis of *caveat emptor*. One of the largest of these shops is on the ground floor of the Palazzo Corvaia, the courtyard of which is shown in a sketch. On a remnant of the marble balustrade of its stairway is seen a quaint relief of the temptation and expulsion from Eden, and the sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Near this is a little Roman theatre built of brick, part of it covered by the church of Sta. Caterina. Another sketch gives the Palazzo S. Stefano, standing in its charming little garden, at the other end of the town. Another shows one of the most lovely ruins in Sicily, the Badia Vecchia, or old convent, with exquisite Gothic windows, and walls inlaid with lava and marble.

The considerable ruins of the theatre stand outside the town to the north. Like all Greek theatres, it enjoyed a splendid view, which the Romans did their best to shut out, which time and spoliation have done their best to open again, and which a band of artists and photographers may generally be seen exploiting. The marble columns, the old red brick and grey stone of the dilapidated buildings, are very beautiful against the background of sea, land, and sky. Etna, the salient feature, is far less imposing from this northern side than from the south, but, like all mountains, is capable of triumphantly silencing the carping critic. More than most, it is a creature of mood and circumstance, a framework for the fleeting embroidery

of the weather. One moment it will be clad in storm and blackness, a vaster Sinai, from which you almost think to hear the voice of a trumpet proclaiming the everlasting law ; then, as in the twinkling of an eye, it will cast aside its mantle of gloom, and stand in tranquil beauty, clad in a robe of many colours, into which every gradation of iridescence seems woven. Again it will don so forbidding a garb of iron-grey that he who sees it thus for the first time will aver that it has neither form nor comeliness, nor even individuality. Through every varying phase it has the subjective fascination born of the long story of its dealings with gods and men, reaching from the fable-land of the past to the tragic facts of yesterday.

I once heard a new-comer, who had arrived at Taormina when Etna was in one of her least lovely moods, remark, that ne knew no famous mountain that was so singularly uninteresting and unimposing. The observation was made in the presence of several residents, who naturally assumed the rôle of *advocatus vulcani*. 'Ah!' said one, 'you do not realize that its height is 10,758 feet, and that its base covers 460 square miles.' The new-comer appeared properly impressed, but the somewhat international company included a German, who promptly subjected the claim to Teutonic analysis. 'Precisely so, we do not realize it, and scenery is but a matter of such realization. A landscape that requires to be helped out by statistics stands self-condemned, however interesting it may be physiographically.' 'That's so,' said an American. 'I've no doubt it's an

instructive object-lesson, but, to look at, it's merely a big cinder heap.'

Sympathy with their subject was by this time making the residents distinctly volcanic, and the harmony of the little party seemed likely to be seriously compromised, when nature augustly intervened. For, even while we spoke, the mountain had, as by a superb movement, cast aside its shroud, and stood transfigured by the wizardry of the dying day. The sun had fallen behind the huge slope, and its light welled up through a sky of incandescent green, and kindled into thin flame the veil of fleecy cloud that overspread the upper heaven. Here and there, a nearer and more massive cloud hung as a pall, darkly luminous, a ragged fringe of blood-red gold trailing from its lower edge; and by the shadow and the light cast down from these the wide expanse of sea was 'dashed with wandering isles of night,' or smitten into flakes of fire. Between the upper and the lower light, the vast cone loomed like a far-stretched tent of purple tapestry, inwoven with mysterious lines. Earth and heaven seemed enfolded in a large solemnity, instinct with a fugitive and subtle beauty, that spoke rather to the spirit than to the eye. In a tone vibrating with emotion, which contrasted oddly with the slang ejaculation, the American voiced our feelings in a word, 'Immense.'

Some such turning of the tables the critical new-comer who has been disappointed with Taormina after the extravagant laudation lavished on it may confidently

THE THEATRE, TAORMINA

expect, if he stay long enough. *Taormina dulcescit*, 'Taormina grows on you,' as Erasmus pleasantly said of England. Perhaps something like the converse is more accurate: you grow, vegetate, in the enchanting climate of Taormina, and the genius loci enters like sap into your veins. This was our experience after four delightful months there, which, in a place that is a runnel for an endless stream of tourists, give a quite aboriginal standing, and all the proprietorial feelings of residents. We had gone there with the view of looking out for a little flat, but inquiry convinced us that housekeeping in Taormina would be an incalculable enterprise, only to be adventured by robust idlers in search of an occupation. Besides, in the course of exploration, we found a pension about to be opened outside the town by a Sicilian family, who won our hearts on first acquaintance, and have them still. Among the caravansaries of many lands, in which we have found a temporary home, there is none to which we look back with such regard. The only fault I ever found with it was that it called itself Beau Séjour, instead of Bel Soggiorno. We were the first occupants, moving in on the last day of the year. Others—Russians, Germans, Americans, and English—came afterwards, and, when we parted in April, I think we all felt fast friends with one another and with our hosts.

These were charming specimens of Sicilians, frank, proud, warm-hearted, serving us with anxious assiduity. The family, who were as difficult to number as the Pleiades,

did all the work of the house. The eldest daughter was manager, the eldest son was the incomparable cook, who had qualified for his profession at the Ritz in Paris, his brother was the ubiquitous and sympathetic waiter, housemaid's work was done by the second daughter, a buxom swarthy girl, who looked a meet bride for a bandit, and whose domestic work was enlivened by an intermittent romance that resulted soon after our departure in an elopement. Below these were a graduated series, each looking an ethnic type, and each with some special function in the household. Looking after foreigners was quite novel work to them, they eagerly welcomed every suggestion, and our ways and requirements were an endless source of interest. We hardly knew whether we were involved in the Carlovingian legend or an idyll of Theokritos, or whether some of the courtly, chivalrous brigands of Sicilian romance were not playing at hotel-keeping, and some morning we should be told that the game had gone on long enough, and it was time to discuss ransom.

I have mentioned an elopement, but hasten to add that this is a normal Sicilian mode of entering the holy estate, in great favour amongst the humbler well-to-do classes, as obviating expense, formalities and needless discussions between the two persons directly concerned and the hundred and one persons who think themselves concerned indirectly. Some fine morning, a young man and young woman are missed in neighbouring houses. The heads of the respective families

VANISHING TAORMINA

upbraid their unworthy offspring, and call heaven to witness that never shall they darken their doors again. For a week or so, they go about their avocations with an air of stern bereavement, then, by a carefully arranged accident, the estranged parents and children meet. The children bend and kiss the parents' hands, there are tears, reproaches, penitence, forgiveness, embraces, and the reunited family settle down quietly to ordinary life. No one is taken in by the little comedy, yet no actor in it fails in the dramatic correctness of his part.

The English-speaking community at Taormina are singularly fortunate in having for the Anglican service, the chapel of the dissolved monastery of Santa Maria e Gésu, now the property and residence of Lady Hill. It is a most pleasing example of Renascence, so excellent in its proportions, so restful in its sweet serenity, that it almost attains to the beauty of holiness, which seems the peculiar property of Gothic. The architecture is *simplex munditiis*, and has been happily left so. On the altar is an old cloth of white silk exquisitely embroidered ; rude green tubs on either side holding some careless-branching, palm-like plants, harmonize delightfully with the general repose.

The foundation of the monastery is said to date from the thirteenth century, but for obscure reasons its name was changed to Sta. Caterina between dissolution and acquisition by its English owners, and the altered style has been perpetuated in the east window, where a buxom, well-millinered St. Catherine, and a

St. George in full coat of mail, stand at the foot of the Cross, apparently too much taken up with one another to give any regard to the tragic form that hangs above. The substitution of this irrelevant couple for the traditional two who thenceforth were to be as mother and son, is to be regretted.

The south door opens into some charming cloisters that connect the chapel with the house. A large mimosa-tree leans from the south-east corner, and roofs the quadrangle with feathery foliage ; the covered walks are lanes of blossom and leafage, tubs of tall flowers on one hand, and a tangle of climbing plants that festoon the arches on the other. A beautiful doorway of Sicilian Gothic gives entry to the pleasant irregular house, a house that no one would have built, and that everyone would like to live in.

The property is one that specially needs the ægis of the first clause of the tenth commandment. The garden lives in my memory as the most enchanting spot in Sicily, the most satisfying realization that I know of Tennyson's 'careless ordered garden.' No doubt there are gardeners, but their ruthless zeal has been so successfully kept within bounds, that the place has all the wayward charm of nature. Amid tangled masses of blossom, and sheets of odorous colour, ablaze in sunshine or flecked with shade, stand mimosas spreading delicate leafage, spires of cypress wrapt in their eternal dream, golden clustered orange and lemon trees, little groves of twisted almonds, latticing the sky and carpeting the ground with blossom. Here and

CORTILE PALAZZO CORVAIA,
TAORMINA

there jasmine, honeysuckle, or climbing rose has taken possession of a branching tree and transformed it into a fountain of foliage and flower. The rambling walks and broad terraces are full of nooks, alleys, and surprises ; the native rock crops out in rugged masses, clothed with the plants that love it ; all about are casual constructions of old masonry—unhewn stone and brick, roughly mortared together, and spared the stucco and wash that give such a hopelessly prosaic air to most masonwork in the neighbourhood—parapets, walls, and pillars of it, an old well, a tiled gateway, a bench built round a hoary olive, complete the air of old-world abandon. Many must have felt devoutly thankful that their way to and from church lay through these lovely grounds ; one could not ask a more glad and peace-giving Venite and Dimittis.

The great concourse of foreign visitors at Taormina has led to a corresponding concourse of beggars, and the visitor has an admirable opportunity of studying one of the most characteristic features of Sicilian life. For pauperism in Sicily is an honoured career ; mendicity, far from being a last resource, is a popular profession, it furnishes a silver lining to any cloud that may darken the clear heaven of Sicilian life ; a deformity is a lucrative birthright ; blindness, lameness, and the like are valuable assets ; the loss of a limb is as good as an annuity. Nor is an endowment of this kind indispensable, for begging is a fine art, a polite accomplishment ; if it be not taught in the schools, it must be a favourite subject of that home instruction, the

value of which is being constantly pressed on us; children who can hardly toddle stretch out their little hands and lisp sentences ending in cinque centesimi. Of course the people are very poor, also they are simple and frugal in their lives; the soft-hearted traveller has not to fear that his alms will be wasted in riotous living; they certainly will not promote drunkenness, though they will very probably contribute to the purchase of a lottery ticket. That is one side of the question. On the other, if a population in a land like Sicily be very poor, I suppose that, in the last analysis, it is their own fault, one may even say their own choice. The mass of a population has always a certain standard of living, beyond the probability of obtaining which they will not multiply. If they live on hard fare, in squalid homes and clothed in rags, it is because they do not greatly care to do otherwise; at least, there are other things—gratifications, indulgences, exemptions—for which they care more. In the long run, the result of the benevolent stranger's donations is to enable a few more persons to exist on the margin of subsistence. Thus does one essay in mendicant regions to harden one's heart. Then, when petrifaction seems complete, and the maleficence of benevolence established beyond controversy, some time-worn, fragmentary fellow-creature totters up, and the strong fortress of our logic goes down before him like a house of cards.

Dancing is another Sicilian characteristic that can be admirably studied at Taormina. The people love dancing with a simple passion that is quite independent

of flirting and fooling, eating and drinking, display of finery, and other adventitious attractions that supplement it elsewhere. Our hosts at the Beau Séjour, after they found that their guests liked it, were always ready to give us in the evening little expositions of the national dances and music, and were delighted if the foreigners would join in. The tarantella they naturally had all to themselves. The traditional dance is not a thing to be trifled with, it is bred in the blood, and taken with almost ceremonial seriousness. But the contre-danses were elaborate versions of our country dances, in which Americans and English could join. We even initiated the Sicilians into Sir Roger, which became immensely popular. The contre-danse evidently came to them, as to us, from France ; one of the party acts as master of ceremonies, shouting the directions in French, comically disguised, but not more so than contre-danse in our 'country dance.' The music was contributed by three brothers with mandolins, one of them a born actor, who now and then gave us little solo comedies, as good as anything of the kind I have seen.

Between Christmas and Lent, Taormina bristles with little dancing-saloons, bare rooms, often with earthen floors, in which the population dance till midnight. The majority are men and boys in toil-stained and sometimes ragged working clothes. The fair sex are mainly represented by occasional old women and children. The instrumental accompaniment may be anything from an accordion to a barrel-organ. Someone puts a few soldi into a box by the musician and calls the dance he

wishes. Anyone who likes may fall in. A quietly happy and keenly critical audience sit on narrow benches round the walls, or cluster in the doorway. Some of these join in from time to time, putting something into the box when they leave.

We had a pleasant example of sheer love of dancing, during a day that we spent with an English friend, a poet, who, years ago, was captivated by the Sicilian idyll, and bought an idyllic little property of miscellaneous cultivation, rock and boscage, on a brow of hill that juts southwards towards the coast a few miles from Taormina. Quite accidentally, our visit coincided with a little fête champêtre. A pig had been killed, and a certain portion allotted to some twenty labourers, engaged in terracing for vines. This was roasted by the massara or wife of the steward, and served in the little courtyard with macaroni and wine ; cigars followed, and great satisfaction was evoked by the announcement that the rest of the day's work would be remitted. Then these men, who had worked from six in the morning, and before that had walked some miles from their homes, several of them grey-headed, with stalwart sons in the company, threw themselves with the fervour of schoolgirls into the energetic footing and fantastic exercises of the tarantella, alternated with the tangled mazes of the contre-danse. Those who took the part of ladies, were distinguished by a coloured handkerchief tied round the right arm. They were mostly in loose shoes of untanned goat-skin, one of them was breeched in the same material,

PALAZZO S. STEFANO, TAORMINA

and might have stood for a satyr. The scene, indeed, irresistibly recalled a quaint woodcut in the beloved old volume from which I received my earliest notions of bucolics. Tityrus reclines under a plane-tree, playing on his pastoral pipe ; sheep and goats stand appreciatively round ; in the background are the same rounded hills, dotted with little square, flat-topped houses that were around us there ; while on a slope below a pair of satyrs, of just the broad, brawny build of these Sicilian peasants, are rhythmically waving their arms, and footing an unmistakable tarantella ; suppressing the horns and hoofs, they might be portraits of these festive labourers in sandals and trousers of shaggy goatskin.

In the carnival season the same friend gave a more elaborate entertainment in his town house. Very charming was the simple enjoyment, the native courtesy and cordiality, entirely free from affectation, assumption, or class-consciousness, with which all sorts and conditions met. The town was full of maskers, and besides the invited guests, groups looked in from time to time, sometimes with flowers, fruit, or sweetmeats, which they offered round ; then they joined in any dance that was going on, or if there were a pause, gave their version of the tarantella. The tarantella is rather an art than a science, and is susceptible of individual touches and variations. Great interest was shown in identifying the masker from his steps. It appeared not to be etiquette for him to speak, or remove his mask, till he was recognized by acclamation. One dancer caused

prolonged mystification by his grotesque and extravagant footing, at which the graver members of the company looked askance, for there is no semblance of buffoonery in the popular dance. It was clearly impossible to identify any individual from such irresponsible antics, and the position was becoming so strained that our host took the serious step of requesting the dancer to remove his mask. He proved to be an elderly man, well known as a singer at the hotels, who, by way of atoning for his indiscretions, gave us Gounod's 'Ave Maria' with real taste and feeling.

One old woman who in her time had been a notable dancer and still retained a reputation as a depository of *les pas d'antan*, danced the tarantella with her granddaughter. Very seriously, and somewhat stiffly and stolidly, did the old lady go through the familiar movements ; portentously serious, and very solicitous, was the child. There was a hush in the crowded room, as the other dancers spontaneously ceased, and watched the rhythmic meeting of the passing and the coming generation. One wondered whether when that child should be in her turn a grandmother the happy, old-world atmosphere in which we were would have wholly passed away. Good things, many and unimaginable, might be reserved for the succeeding time, but would they be paid for by the loss of this simple enjoyment that asked nothing for its exercise but its own kindly and careless mind ?

It is impossible not to be fascinated by the charm and grace of the Sicilian character and manner, which

ETNA, GIARDINI, AND SCHISÒ, FROM
TAORMINA

has all the appropriateness to its setting of a natural product. In this delightful climate, in the home of the old nature myths, amid the wrecks of cyclic civilizations that have flourished and passed away like flowers of the field, even the rigid, conventional Briton formed on a procrustean bed of Puritanism, thinly mattressed with eclectic theologies, is sensible of a subconscious adaptation to environment, an invading contentment with tossing carelessly down the pleasant stream of life, and letting the day be sufficient to itself. There arises an irrepressible suggestion of something elemental in us, a feeling that, like breeze and sunshine, blossom and sea-foam, we are transient expressions of universal being. Like them we have our day and cease to be, but the day is bright and beautiful, and still, when it is over, 'we are a part of all that we have seen.' We rub our eyes as we realize that our nonconformist conscience is dozing into unwonted conformity to its surroundings; it is only by an effort that we revert to the old tables of stone that are still the bedrock of English thought, whatever philosophies may overlie them.

In the wide prospect from Taormina the eye is continually drawn to a little promontory, dark almost to blackness, that juts into the sea between two long white curves of beach. This, now known as Schisò, has peculiar interest as the site of Naxos, founded by Theokles of Chalkis, who first led Greeks to Sicily. In the words of Freeman, 'the Greek came to the island charged in the freshness of his national being with the noblest errand of his time, the representative

of the younger and more abiding culture of the West, the beginner of that historic life of Europe which we still live.' By the city stood an altar to Apollo Archegetes, which through all the bitter wars and rivalries of Greek with Greek kept fresh the memory of their common blood and faith. All Sikeliots who went to take part in the great festivals of the mother-land came here first to do sacrifice. It is sad that the destruction of the sacred city was due to a Greek. After it had stood for 400 years it crossed the policy of Dionysios of Syracuse in some unpardonable way, and in 402 B.C. he gained possession of it by treachery, destroyed it, and sold the citizens as slaves. Why the tyrant, who posed as the champion of Hellas, and who had, moreover, the imagination to be touched by the claims of the ancient little commonwealth, should have dealt so hardly with it, is difficult to say.

The promontory is the extremity of a prehistoric stream of lava that can be traced in a long ridge across the plain from the slope of Etna. As the inhabitants regretfully remark, if it had only gone a little further it would have thrust a breakwater across the chord of the bay and formed a splendid harbour. It is a charming spot; the worn and fretted lava curves into little coves where the sea lies deep and clear, and invites irresistibly to a plunge. Amid dense lemon groves on the southern side is a great wall, bowered in bramble; it is evidently of very ancient construction, built of blocks of lava, slightly shaped to make them fit together, and, Orsi thinks, is probably Greek.

XV

BETWEEN TAORMINA AND SYRACUSE

The Circumetna railway can be pleasantly taken on the journey from Taormina to Catania, and affords an interesting survey of the lower slopes of the great volcano. With the exception of a few unsubmerged tracts of tertiary limestone in the west, the whole route is over lava, which is seen in every stage, from the hardened stream, still showing the swirls, eddies and ripples of the molten rock, to the complete disintegration that furnishes a soil of extraordinary fertility, every rood of which is put to profit. All the buildings are of lava, from the rudest lairs, that seem little more than heaps of broken rock, to churches and palaces in which the black stone is carved into Gothic and Renascence details.

Catania is a fine modern town, with late medieval touches here and there, and some interesting Greek remains, mainly underground; she is the most prosperous and progressive of Sicilian cities, a centre of higher education, and of political and social unrest. Through all her history she has been the plaything of appalling

natural forces, shaken to pieces by earthquake, overflowed by lava, and ever, with indomitable faith, she has risen from destruction, built herself anew out of ruin or from the material that buried her, sheltered her commerce with breakwaters constructed from the black rock that, molten and incandescent, poured into and filled her natural harbour. On the broad volcanic slopes behind—'lands deluged by unbridled floods of fire'—the destroying streams have mouldered into a soil of marvellous productivity, densely populated, variously and intensively cultivated, seamed here and there with long tracts of desolation, which beneficent, recuperative forces are slowly reconquering for the use of man; for Etna is the fairy godmother of the neighbourhood, in her right hand are riches, and in her left terror and death.

Everywhere in the city are reminders of the terrible powers from whom she holds her life in fee. The surface on which she stands has stereotyped the waves and currents of the molten rock; some of her streets are like descending streams solidified, others are crossed by the great bulging ridge in which the viscous fluid rolled seawards. Behind and beside her, rises the black hardened torrent of 1669, which turned aside when it reached her wall, on which was displayed the veil of S. Agatha. In the background, filling all the landward prospect, stretches the inscrutable cone, sometimes wrapped in sulphurous pall, at others shining and immaculate, like a vast white-mantled altar—an altar not of sacrament but of sacrifice, on which whole

populations, and the work of patient centuries, have been devoted to destruction.

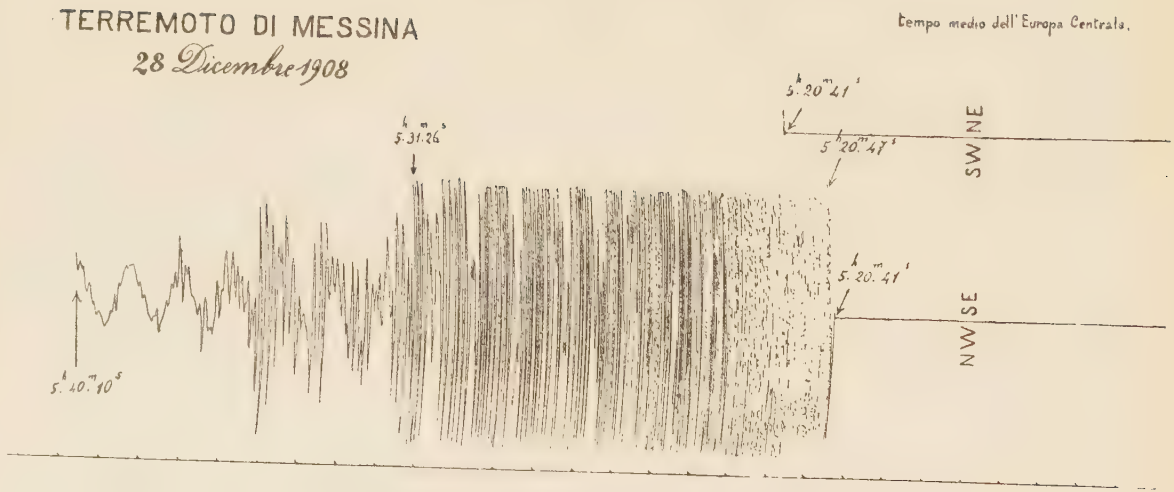
The glory of Catania is its Observatory, which is under the distinguished direction of Professor Annibale Riccò. The clear atmosphere gives the station particular advantages for astronomical observation and photography ; for these there is a special building, provided with the most elaborate modern instruments, and arranged for the collaboration of astronomers from all parts of the world. The institution is also specially well equipped for seismometry. By various delicate appliances it keeps a constant finger on the pulse of the restless earth, noting not only its violent spasms, but the slight incessant tremors that are imperceptible to human sense, though a tromometer, furnished with a microscope, enables even these to be seen. All the instruments are connected electrically with a photochronograph in which the shock lights an electric lamp by which the hour, minute and second at which it occurs is photographed from a chronometer.

The most imposing of these instruments, the Grande Sismometrografo, is a pendulum consisting of a mass of lava weighing 3,000 kilograms suspended from iron beams by a steel cable 25 metres long in a shaft sunk in the solid rock. The whole is enclosed in a case of zinc, and beyond this is one of wood. This enormous weight responds to the slightest motion of the earth, and by means of clockwork attached to it the N.W., S.E., and S.W., N.E. components of these are registered by two pens on a revolving coil of paper.

A notion of the sensitiveness of this ponderous apparatus may be gathered from the fact that when it was first placed in position it was found to be unaccountably perturbed when anyone approached it. It was thought this might be due to the vibration of the ground the observer trod on, and a wooden gangway attached to the wall of the shaft was placed round it. Still the great instrument trembled when anyone came near it, and at length it was discovered that the perturbation arose from the disturbance of the air. It ceased, as by magic, when protection from this was afforded by the casing of wood within which it is now able to give its undivided attention to the motions of the earth.

Professor Riccò gave me the accompanying seismogram which registers the attempt of this huge apparatus to record the terrible earthquake that destroyed Messina. Its failure is perhaps a more impressive illustration of the violence of the disturbance than could have been given by the most perfect registration. The pen for recording the S.W., N.E. component was broken with the first shock, just as it began to mark, so that it did nothing but note the moment when the convulsion commenced. The record of the N.W., S.E. component was rendered irregular by contact of the enormous mass of the pendulum with the casing within which it swung.

From Valsavoia, fourteen miles from Catania, an interesting branch line runs up to Caltagirone. Twenty miles on is Mineo, anciently Menænum, the first capital



SEISMOGRAM OF THE MESSINA EARTHQUAKE

of Ducetius, the one great national leader that the Sikel race produced. He conceived the large idea of knitting into political unity the incoherent mass of the elder folk of the land, who still held the interior, and were the vastly preponderant element in the population. Mineo is perched on a lofty isolated hill, with a deeply cleft summit. In this fastness, a capital of the earlier type, Ducetius dwelt for five or six years, working out his great design. Then, when nearly all the Sikel states had given their adhesion to it, he seems to have considered that the new realm required a more up-to-date metropolis, and founded one on a site that would appeal to all his people. Some five miles from Menænum were the holy Delli, twin lakelets, covering two rents in the earth from which mephitic vapour bubbled up through the water. This troubled water was sacred to the twin brethren, the Palici, immemorial gods of the Sicilian soil, kindly earth-born gods, like all the native deities. They were held to specially concern themselves with good-faith and good-will between man and man; no oath was so binding, nor fenced with such swift penalties for its violation, as that sworn with an ancient and simple ceremonial in their temple; specially were they protectors of slaves, as befitted the gods of a race who had been so largely subjected; their temple was an inviolable sanctuary for those who fled from ill-treatment; the pursuing owner met them there not as chattels but as men, and could only recover them after a solemn covenant to deal fairly with them in the future, which was contracted with the same simple

ritual, and which Diodoros says he had never known to be broken. Near this is a plateau of rough rock, known as I Cavoni from the ancient tombs with which it is pierced, where Ducetius is supposed to have founded his short-lived capital, Palica, connecting it by walls with the temple and the sacred pool, and invoking the aid of the humane yet awful brethren for the redemption of his race.

He invaded Akragas, took a town named Motyon, and defeated a combined army of Syracusans and Akragantines ; but in the following year the Akragantines retook Motyon, and the Syracusans defeated him in a long and hard-fought battle. The suddenness with which his army melted away and his confederacy fell to pieces on the first failure, suggests a people that either feared their fate too much or whose desert was small. Intrigue and treachery appearing even among the few who remained with him, he one night left them unaware, rode down alone to Syracuse, and seated himself before the altar of Zeus in the Agora as a suppliant of the city. With the innate political instinct of Greek democracies, the people gathered round to deliberate on the life or death of the man who sat silent before them. There were those who urged that the fallen foe should be put to death, but in the end nobler counsels prevailed. The question was not, it was finely said, what Ducetius merited, but what was becoming for Syracuse. The vote to spare the suppliant was carried by acclamation, but common prudence forbade that he should remain in Sicily.

The happy relations between the colony and the mother-city supplied a remedy, and Ducetius was sent to dwell at Corinth as a pensioner of Syracuse. There he abode five years. Then we hear that, at the bidding of the gods, he led a colony—presumably Greeks, and, we must suppose, with the approval of Corinth and Syracuse—to settle on the northern shore of his native island, where he founded the city of Kale Akte, 'the fair shore,' that lived on as Calacta, but has now disappeared.

In the course of his life Ducetius had founded three cities, which seem types of successive stages of civilization, usually separated by long intervals of time—Menænum on the hill-top, Palica on the inland plain, Kale Akte by a haven of the sea—and it is typical of the inherent atavism of his race that only the first survives. In his latest enterprise he does not appear to have cherished the great designs of his earlier life. He had won in vain for his people his single victory, and he accepted his single defeat as deciding the lot of the Sikel. They were to be through all their history a subject and a submerged race, whose destiny would be worked out under the name and leadership of others, an Issachar of the nations, bowing the shoulder to the burden first of Greek, then of Roman, servant of Saracen, Norman, Frenchman, Spaniard, their land in turn the least considered moiety of a greater Sicily, and seven half-assimilated provinces of the Italian kingdom. Withal, they were ever to have a stubborn consciousness of individuality, a carking sense of disinheritance,

CASTROGIOVANN

that would express itself in sullen abstention from the polity in which they were merged, or in fiery and futile outbreak.

The line terminates twenty-one miles beyond Mineo at Caltagirone, a pleasant, well-to-do city, over 2,000 feet above the sea, where the characteristic Sicilian pottery is largely made. An interesting road leads hence to Castrogiovanni, passing by the Albanian settlement of Piazza Armerina, which crowns fertile slopes more wooded than most parts of Sicily, then by Pietraperzia, with a noble Norman castle, and finally descending to the unsightly, pestiferous pool that now represents the Lake of Pergusa, of which Ovid gives so enchanting a description. On the side by which we approach it is the cavern, now choked with stones, by which Pluto burst a passage to hell for the car in which he rapt Persephone from among the daffodils. Finally we thread a gorge between red cliffs chambered with tombs or dwellings, many of which are still inhabited, pass the little railway station of Castrogiovanni, and mount in long windings to the city, the ancient Henna, the most peculiarly holy place in Sicily.

I wound up the long ascent on an afternoon of torrential rain, catching glimpses of the impregnable walls and precipices through a veil of falling water. The city and its site seem the very expression of the proud title of ' L'Inespugnabile,' which it derives from Livy, and which it can fairly claim to have maintained. The mass of ancient limestone has resisted the denudation that has worn into little dells and hillocks the later

formations that once covered it, and on this man has placed a stronghold as unyielding as itself, and enclosing unfailing springs of water. Though in the Punic wars it frequently changed hands, this was always due to treachery. Here began the first great slave-war, and here the haggard bands made the final stand that only yielded to famine. The Saracens besieged it for thirty-one years, and at length took it by creeping in through a sewer. The Normans gained their first and greatest victory beneath its walls, but only obtained entrance twenty-six years afterwards, through the faithlessness of the Arab governor.

By dawn the rain had ceased, and I went up on the flat roof of the house and found myself beneath a cloudless sky, though clouds still lay scattered over the landscape, and stretched ghostly arms towards the grey city on its huge pedestal of rock. The immemorial landscape, hill tossed beyond hill in multitudinous disorder, seemed to float around, billowy, impalpable, unveiling from moment to moment as the mist parted and shrank into ragged masses that floated slowly upwards and melted into the blue ; round the base of Etna clouds clung dark and sullen, while above, looking incredibly high and incredibly near, the broad white cone was set against the kindling eastern sky. Seated defiantly on the opposite hill was the rival city of Centuripe ; others, set on more distant hills, gleamed phantomlike in the nascent day. Hard by the house, rose the grass-grown towers of the cathedral, and, on a promontory flung boldly forward to the north, the

crumbling walls and towers of the castle. At the extremity of the promontory is a great isolated rock, a throne hewn by gods for a goddess, from which the temple of Demeter once looked down on widespread lands of unparalleled exuberance, where the grain brought forth a hundredfold, and the odour of blossom was so strong that hounds lost the scent.

In this centre of Sicily we seem in the very heart of the ancient world, the home of those strange, brooding beliefs that underlay so many theologies, common to diverse races, borrowed by countless creeds, tricked out in the graces of art and fancy, the playthings of the ages, yet appealing still with primeval sanction and fresh significance. Here, in the middle of the midmost land of the midland sea, in the most fruitful of its varied soils, beside earth's most tremendous hearth, in the glare and echo of the eternal forges, were born and enshrined the weird myths by which man explained to himself the mysterious powers of nature in whose intricate web his life and works were enmeshed, whose hands were full of gifts, and their wrath a consuming fire.

It is curious that, while mention of Demeter and the Kore abounds in early Greek writers, we find no mention of Henna as the scene of the legend and their chosen sanctuary. Yet it had assuredly been both from time immemorial; it would almost seem as though Hellas were jealous of a worship that she had so wholly made her own, or, maybe, the primitive Sikel myth had its place among those inarticulate, subconscious beliefs,

with which the poets dared not intermeddle, and regarding which there was so much reticence that we can but dimly surmise them. From Latin writers Henna has its due. The earliest mention of the city as the sanctuary of the mother and daughter is said to be in Livy's account of the massacre there by the Romans, 214 B.C., and of the thrill of horror that the sacrilege sent through Sicily, and it is to Cicero that we owe our knowledge of the ancient religious importance of the place where first corn grew for the use of man. 'Cererum antiquissimum placari opportet,' had been the Sybil's injunction in civic trouble. 'In our own city,' he continues, 'Ceres had a fair and most sumptuous temple, yet a mission had to be sent to Enna; such was the sanctity and antiquity of the region that those who went there seemed not so much to go to the house of the goddess, as to draw near to the goddess herself.'

Henna has in some sort kept its ancient name, for the Castrum Ennæ of the Romans became Casr Janni for the Saracens, which perhaps was mistaken for Castrum Johannis by its Christian conquerors. The Latin name shows how early the holy place had become a stronghold of war, as its position could not fail to make it. Wandering through the town it seemed an irony that the ancient haunt of the bountiful goddess should now be the home of glum, grinding poverty, a poverty apparently bravely combated, want just kept from the door by the strenuous, unremitting effort that is its own reward to the race that maintains it, for the inhabitants are of a fine, sturdy type, the men frank

STREET IN CASTROGIOVANNI

and stalwart, the women with pleasing faces and sometimes a wistful beauty.

The dilapidated town has many relics of its former greatness ; mouldering gateways and doorways, palace courts and stairways. The cathedral dates from the fourteenth century, and many interesting Gothic features survive. The interior has, I suppose, every fault that architecture can commit, yet forms a not ineffective nor inharmonious whole, with the suggestion, which the humblest church may have and the most splendid may lack, of a kingdom that is not from hence. In the sacristy I saw a treasure such as can be accumulated in very few rooms in the world, and which it was strange to find in the poverty-stricken town. Round the walls are tall cupboards filled with silver lamps and vessels ; from a huge, elaborately locked iron chest built into the floor were drawn forth a dazzling and, it seemed, interminable succession of works in gold and precious stone—massive crosses, monstrances and reliquaries ; flagons, chalices, and patens ; priceless jewellery, and, the great pride of the church, a golden crown, exquisitely enamelled and encrusted with precious stones, the gift of a Queen of Spain to the Virgin. I was told, and could well believe it, that this masterpiece of medieval goldsmith's work had been recently valued at two million lire.

Twenty miles beyond Valsavoia is Augusta, built on a little peninsula running due south from the northern bend of the bay of Megara, with deep water on either side, the midmost of the three fine natural harbours

with which the eastern coast of Sicily is endowed. The fortification of this was the Italian answer to Bizerta, where—opposite to their southern shore, ominously near to Rome's ancient and deadliest foe—the French, by cutting a short canal from the sea to a deep and spacious lake, created a harbour in which a whole navy might ride at anchor, secure from every danger but being 'bottled.' The Italian project, however, has never got much beyond inception, partly, perhaps, on account of the happier relations that supervened between the two great Latin nations.

The bay of Megara takes its name from Megara Hyblaia, the fourth and last settlement that Lamis of the elder Megara led from Greece. The several attempts of this little community to found a city are an unedifying example of Greek methods between themselves and with outsiders. The same may be said of the destruction of Megara, 250 years after, by Gelon of Syracuse. With the exception of a possible fragment of its wall, built into a modern house, it has wholly disappeared.

Midway down the long curve of the gulf is the little peninsula now known as Magnisi, the ancient Thapsos, a flat mass of miocene nummulitic limestone, that at no distant date must have been an island. Here the Megarian colonists just mentioned spent a winter, during which Lamis died, and Thapsos again appears in history as a landing place of Nikias for the investment of Syracuse, but long before Greeks came to Sicily there was a large Sikel population there, whose

sepulchres are now the sole object of interest on the spot. They are mostly cut in the low cliffs on the northern and eastern coast, but there are some inland which are entered by a shaft sunk vertically in the bare, rocky surface, and are said to be connected by subterranean passages with those on the coast. Lime-burners, treasure seekers, and the encroaching sea have wrought sad havoc among them; but in spite of destruction and depredation, Professor Orsi of Syracuse has here gathered a rich harvest of facts for his books, and objects for his museum.

In what is known as Sepulchre 1 were found twenty-two skeletons, nineteen with heads against the wall, radiating like a fan round three in the centre, some recumbent with legs bent, others sitting naturally; on the fleshless finger of one was a bronze ring, on some skulls were circlets, rings that had dropped from mouldering ears lay on the floor. In the centre were remains of a colossal basin, which doubtless held drink for the ghostly banquet; along the wall were ranged little flasks and cups. In all the tombs there is an extraordinary profusion of pottery, much of which seems to have been specially manufactured for sepulchral use. There are fragments of very large vases on pedestals, apparently of native manufacture, and others that testify to foreign trade.

In Sepulchre 6 was found a long-stemmed cup of great interest, as it bears the only portrayal of the human figure known in the rude Sikel art, a somewhat cryptic design that has to be looked at with an in-

structed faith in the experts. These consider it to represent a man holding a sword, point downwards, in the left hand, and leaning towards a boat with high prow, and two oars at its curved stern.

It was probably due to foreign intercourse that these Thapsian tombs show signs of architectural feeling and careful cutting in advance of anything found in other Sikel cemeteries. The motives seem oriental grafted on the original construction, which simply reproduced in the enduring stone of the sepulchre the frail primitive habitation of mortal life. This notion of continuing, so far as might be, in the tomb the conditions of this present world, evidently inspired the whole ceremonial for the dead. The existence that men entered through the grave and gate of death was a shadowy likeness of the life that now is; a great change passed over them, but they were still themselves; the bodily senses may be for ever quieted, and the arm of the flesh dropping into dust, but the personality that had been so alert and individual could not have ceased to be; it must still, in some manner, persist, with its intimate wants and indefeasible consciousness; it still needed sustenance, raiment, arms, and could delight in the objects it had prized on earth. Profoundly interesting are these memorials of man's early intimations of immortality. Here we have a people maintaining a precarious footing on one of the lowest and narrowest ledges of civilization, hardly raised above the level at which the bare necessities of existence, the holding their own against ravening beast and ruthless nature, must have

engrossed all time and thought, already returning the obstinate answer of the soul to the negations of reason and the senses:

'Peace, let it be! for I loved him and love him for ever: the dead are not dead but alive.'

XVI

SYRACUSE IN HISTORY

For favoured site on sea and land, for ancient romance and renown, for the many vicissitudes of her long story, the wide issues that have been interwoven with her fortunes, the dramatic manner in which certain crises of her history have arrested the attention of mankind, and touched the imagination of all time, no Sicilian city is comparable to Syracuse, the faithful daughter of Corinth, who in the proud security of her great harbour, of the island citadel that cradled her, and of the broad upland along whose edge she set her wall in her marvellous later growth, held her own against the secular hate of Carthage, was victress in mortal combat over infatuated Athens, and almost successful in defiance of omnipotent Rome.

The first Corinthian colony of Syracuse was planted on the little island of Ortygia, which is separated from the main island by a narrow streak of sea, and, with the opposite promontory of Plemmyrion, encloses a spacious harbour. As the city prospered, it outgrew its islet cradle, filled the little flat beyond the narrow

strait, and then gradually climbed and overspread the great limestone plateau that tapers inland, westwards and upwards, a tolerably regular isosceles triangle, of which the base is the line of sea-fretted cliffs on the east, the vertex the great fortress of Euryalos, and the sides steep escarpments rising from a flat alluvial plain. It was a splendid defensive position, and as the city thus strategically placed, both for war and commerce, in the centre of the ancient world, offered the finest plunder in the Mediterranean, it is not surprising that great sieges form the salient features of its history.

The first of these great sieges (415-413 B.C.) had the fortune to be 'told as no other tale ever was told' by Thucydides. As we wander over the site of the vanished city, and the country round, or survey them from the ruins of Euryalos, they seem little more than a full-size relief map to illustrate his splendid pages. The bare and almost empty land is repeopled with eager combatants, and we see the coil of fate gradually tightening round the grandiose, ill-considered enterprise that lured the noblest commonwealth of the ancient world to its doom, and perhaps changed the trend of Western history. We see the ill-assorted triumvirate in command, the devout and irresolute Nikias, who had put with unanswerable force the arguments against the expedition that he was to lead to disaster; the versatile and unprincipled Alkibiades, his personal enemy, soon recalled on a charge of sacrilege, which he discreetly resolved not to meet; Lamachos, the capable and courageous soldier, whose advice, had it been followed, would,

Thucydides thinks, have given prompt success to the ambitious undertaking. We see the endless hesitations and vacillations of Nikias, his capacity when he could bring himself to act, his failure to improve his successes—notably exemplified in his first victory by the great temple of Zeus, two columns of which still stand in lonely majesty. We see the two hostile armies mustered on the same morning on opposite sides of the great plateau, for the occupation of the supreme strategic post of Epipolai, each unaware of the other. Six hundred Syracusans had been told off for its garrison, and were about to start, when the rising sun, glinting on a fringe of arms and helmets on the ridge of the coveted position, showed them that the Athenians were before them, and their hurried and disorderly attack was driven down in confusion. We see the lines of investment closing round the city, the cross-wall by which the besieged strove to cut the investing force in two, the constant skirmishes as the builders tried to foil one another, the death of the redoubtable Lamachos, when throwing himself to the front with a handful of men, to steady his troops during a temporary panic. Our minds are carried across the sea to the great debates at Corinth and Sparta, resulting in the resolve to aid the hard-pressed Dorian colony ; we see the volatile Syracusans mustering to discuss terms of surrender, when Gongylos, the Corinthian, who had hurried forward with a single ship, flung himself in their midst with news that help was at hand. Then comes Gylippos himself, marching

across the island with a little force of allies, and passing into the beleaguered city through the one gap left in the Athenian lines, where the double walls of investment stood half finished, with stones lying piled for their completion. 'So near,' writes Thucydides, 'was Syracuse to destruction.'

With the advent of this consummate commander, in whom the indomitable soldiership of Sparta was combined with an alertness and intuition more characteristic of Athenian warfare, the whole face of affairs was changed. The investment was gradually checkmated at all points, and Nikias wrote: 'We who are supposed to be the besiegers are really besieged.' The Syracusans gradually gained experience on the water, and augmented their fleet, constructing a type of ship specially designed for shock tactics in the landlocked harbour, while the Athenians, compelled to fight at close quarters, could derive little advantage from the nimble seamanship on which they had been accustomed to rely for victory. Encouraged by an indecisive battle, the Syracusans brought on a general engagement by land and sea, in which success finally fell to them, and the tradition of Athenian maritime supremacy was broken.

Nearly all Sicily, as Nikias had written home, was now uniting against the invaders. But Athens that had sent them was still undaunted: seventy-three sail, with large reinforcements and supplies, was her answer to Nikias' gloomy despatch. Demosthenes, who brought this aid, was associated with him in the

command, and at once resolved that the only hope lay in daring tactics: unless the Athenians could seize the head of the Syracusan cross-wall, and occupy Epipolai, it was useless their remaining in Sicily. After failing in an attack on the cross-wall, he resolved to attempt a night-surprise on the height with his whole available force, provisioned for five days, and equipped with requisites for siege-works. Instead of attacking the nearer and easier southern slope, where he would have been expected, he marched round the western point of Belvedere to the spot where first Lamachos, and then Gylippos had mounted to the plateau. Taught by the double lesson, the Syracusans had now a fort there, which Demosthenes took, having reached and scaled the cliff unperceived. He and his men then descended towards the city, carrying all before them, till their order was lost in the impetuous advance, and the enemy recovered from their surprise. Through the hours of a moonlit night the two armies, inextricably mixed, surged over the plateau in confused and doubtful battle; each comprised contingents from many different Greek nationalities; friend was indistinguishable from foe; there were the surprises, the illusions, the baffling bewilderment, the horrible mistakes, of a dream. Gradually the fight went against the Athenians: one by one their scattered bands were cut to pieces or broke into disordered flight. The desperate enterprise, on which Demosthenes had staked all, had failed.

He now urged the evacuation of Sicily, but it was

long ere Nikias could make up his mind to this. When at length he consented, an eclipse of the moon occurred, which he was persuaded by soothsayers made any movement inauspicious for thrice nine days, an unfortunate theology that sealed the doom of his country. During that fatal procrastination the Syracusans forced a general engagement, and gained a complete victory on land and sea, which enabled them to stretch a line of ships, joined by bridges, and bound together with chains, across the mouth of the harbour, and pen in the Athenian fleet. This still outnumbered theirs, but the spell of its old prestige was gone, the crews were cowed by their retreat being cut off, and, cooped within the harbour, had no room for the quick and dexterous evolutions that had so often given Athens the mastery at sea.

The final tragedy fell on the holy day of Herakles. The 'condensed and burning phrases' in which Thucydides describes the long, obstinate, and fluctuating battle are probably the most famous piece of historical writing in existence. We hear in it the speeches of the leaders before giving battle, the crash of charging galleys, the cries of command, encouragement, defiance, despair, from the battleships, and from the crowds that watch them on the shore. We see the furious dash of the Athenians towards the closed mouth of the harbour overpower the centre of the Syracusan fleet, the closing in upon them of the wings, as they vainly tried to undo the fastenings of the swaying line of ships, the desperate hand-to-hand fighting from deck

to deck, the rush of the land forces to aid or beset any ship driven to the shore. Finally, the triumphant bearing down of the home fleet on the hapless invaders, driven from the sea in such utter hopelessness of soul that no exhortation of the leaders could induce them to make a second attempt against the fatal barrier.

The 40,000 spirit-broken men in the Athenian camp were no longer an army but a crowd. Still, could they have struggled inland, some stand might have been made among Sikels hostile to Syracuse, but Nikias, with incomprehensible credulity, was beguiled by a trick into delaying retreat till the Syracusans had had time to bar all the passes into the interior, and guard the fords. Then at length he set out, but after three days of miserable wandering, trying first one, then another, path of escape, always beset by the nimble Syracusans, he surrendered with the last remnant of his men at the ford of the Assinaros. The rear division under Demosthenes had been surrounded on the first day and compelled to capitulate. The generals, after the fashion of the time, were executed ; the rest were sold or allotted as slaves, or wasted away in the slow agony of the latomia.

The fortunes of Athens had fallen never to rise again. For some time she stood desperately at bay against the ring of jealous foes and revolted vassals that closed round her like hungry wolves, till the inevitable end came at Aigos-potamos. The triumph of Syracuse had destroyed the commonwealth in which, with all its

imperfections, man had attained the finest and fullest development that he has known.

Even more momentous issues hung upon the second great investment by Himilkon the Carthaginian (396 B.C.), for it was an episode in the great secular strife, 'Græcia barbariæ longo collisa duello,' that touched the imagination of antiquity from Herodotus to Horace, and made the Iliad the epic not of a race only, but of a civilization. On this occasion Syracuse was greater than she knew. Her strong walls, which Dionysios had just completed in time, the pestiferous marshes of the Anapos, and the tyrant's brilliant strategy, set back the rising tide of Semitic aggression for a generation, during which a mightier champion than the disunited Hellenic states arose for Europe.

The last great beleaguerment (214-212 B.C.) was made memorable by the marvellous genius of one old man. By means that seem fabulous and that remain inexplicable, Archimedes held at bay for three years the fleets and armies, and the most capable commander, of the mightiest nation of the ancient world. The story of the siege reads like a Manichæan duel between mind and matter; the Romans said that the old mathematician was the soul of Syracuse, and the other inhabitants, and the material defences, the body that did its hest. In the end, and in spite of him—through folly that almost seems to mark the city as one 'quam deus vult perdere' —Syracuse succumbed, fell for ever from her high estate, and left no withstanding obstacle in Europe to the might of Rome.

With her fell all hope of a united Hellenic Sicily, which, not once nor twice only, it had seemed in her power to bring about. It was but with puny and wavering spirit that she had responded to great and recurring opportunities, and the well-founded fear of her selfish and grasping temper had always kept the lesser Sikeliot states from accepting her hegemony, first against Punic, then against Roman rivalry. When the time for this had passed, she might still have secured the free play of her Hellenic life by acquiescing in Roman direction of general affairs ; but, with a fatuous combination of vacillation and temerity, she played into the hands of the plodding, uninspiring power that knew its mind and kept its way, that never renounced an aim, and was daunted by no defeat.

For centuries after her fall Syracuse held a large place in the Roman world. Astute Romans exploited her splendid commercial position, her fertile neighbourhood and accumulated art treasures ; Marcellus commenced the plunder that has been pilloried in history by Cicero's indictment of Verres. But gradually the great city shrank and dwindled, and to-day the sole monuments of that long story of splendour and ignominy, of lavish material endowment and spiritual inadequacy, are the little island town and the vast desolate plateau, where winds sweep and wail like wraiths of perished greatness.

XVII

SYRACUSE TO-DAY

The fascination of the past that haunts all Sicily culminates at Syracuse. In this respect no other neighbourhood in the island can compare with it. This wind-swept, sun-scorched plateau, white with the dust of dead cities, these wide plains and low, stony hills, sown with the waste of immemorial civilizations, the tattered, sea-worn cliffs, chambered by forgotten races with the dwellings of their dead, have an inexhaustible interest that multiplies as one knows them. Combined with this is a delightful climate—perhaps the balmiest and brightest winter climate in Europe—and a peculiar charm of scenery, unkempt, casual, featureless, but ever being dramatized by the weather, framed, moreover, in a spaciousness of sea and sky which change incessantly, as though the scenic accompaniment of vast Wagnerian harmonies.

As has been already mentioned, the later and greater Hellenic Syracuse spread far beyond the narrow island hill which cradled the first settlement, to which Roman and medieval Syracuse again shrank, and which the

Syracuse of to-day is again outgrowing, stretching casual and squalid suburbs over the little flat beyond the strait, and up the slopes of the broad, rocky plateau on which stood four of the great townships of Syracuse, the μεγαπόλιες Συράκουσαι of its builders, the *quadruplices Syracusæ* of its conquerors.

In spite of all explanations, it is difficult to understand the entire disappearance of buildings from this plateau, which now lies bare and ghostly, the grave of a great city. Everywhere we see the stony surface carved by the hand of man; there are vast vertical quarries, hollowed tombs, incised niches, streets planed in the rock and scored with wheel-ruts, deep grooves for foundations, levelled floors, water-runnels, wells sunk to subterranean aqueducts, but of masonry we hardly find a fallen fragment, or one stone remaining on another. The limestone, of loosely compacted fossils, has been disintegrated by cold and heat, beaten and blown by the wind, dissolved by acids of the atmosphere, so that the vast city has literally crumbled into dust and melted into air.

All that survives of the earliest is to be found in the latest city, which is packed closely on the Island of Ortygia. The two temples of which remains exist have the thickset proportions—somewhat clumsy, but very impressive—that characterize the first age of Doric.

The imposing ruin that has been partly excavated in the Via Diana is that of a remarkable hexastyle temple that must have shown at least nineteen columns

on each side. The columns—only two of which remain entire—were monoliths of sandstone, their height of only four and a half diameters, and their heavy capitals indicate a very early date. Probably it is the oldest Greek temple of which remains exist in Sicily, and was 'raised by Kleomenes to Apollo' soon after the founding of the city low down on this northern slope of the island, above the sheltered shore where the first colonists beached their vessels.

The other temple has become the Cathedral of Syracuse, the Church of Santa Maria delle Colonne, in one respect the most interesting building in Christendom. For something like twenty-five centuries it has continuously been the scene of religious worship, and each successive faith has still a witness among its stones; its confused jumble of styles sums up the religious history of Syracuse, and gives it a fascination to which it certainly has no æsthetic claim. Embedded in its walls, and represented by objects converted to strangely alien uses in its ceremonial, is the record of the old polytheism; nearly every age of the Christianity that supplanted this is represented somewhere in the building. The interruption of Christian use during the two centuries that it was a Mohammedan mosque is recalled by the double row of Saracenic battlements that have replaced the Doric cornice, while the pretentious structure that rises at its western end, seeming an uncouth compromise between a tower and a porch, brings it into touch with later Latin Christianity.

The structural framework of the edifice is the Doric temple, which the authorities consider to be that of Athena, erected in the sixth century B.C. The wealth of the richest and most luxurious city of the ancient world was lavished on it. Cicero in his indictment of Verres dilates on its beauty, its treasures, and its exquisite and costly decorations, which were plundered by the rapacious pro-consul.

The great building stood on a stylobate of three steps that still remains; it was surmounted by a huge gilded shield, and, according to one account, by a colossal statue of the goddess. Crowning the island hill, and towering in serene majesty above the low Greek houses round, it must have presented a most imposing appearance from the sea, assuring the voyager from distant Hellas that he had not wandered beyond the presence and protection of Hellenic gods. It is pathetic to think how, in the great sea-fight below, either side may have looked up to the majestic fane and invoked the protection of that gleaming shield. To the Athenians in their agony it must have seemed that the gods, more faithless than men, 'animum mutant qui trans mare currunt,' that, seduced by barbaric gold and sumptuous ceremonial, Athena had forgotten the fair city that was called by her name, and turned her terrible spear against the people of her ancient choice.

Most of the old temple is embedded in the later church as a fossil in a stone. It was a peripteral hexastyle. Of its thirty-six columns, eleven remain on the north and nine on the south, built into the wall of the church, but

STA MADRE DEI MIRACOLI, SYRACUSE

showing both within and without, and still surmounted by the ancient architrave, their height five times the diameter of the base. It is from these venerable remains, amid which Sappho, Æschylus, Pindar, Herodotus, and Plato may have loitered, that the Blessed Virgin, as tutelary of the church, takes her title of St. Mary of the Pillars.

The naos and its adjuncts form the nave; round archways have been cut in the side-walls, converting wings of the temple into aisles of the church. The naos is said to have been decorated by Zeuxis; its famous doors of gold and ivory were among the treasures carried off by Verres. Both pronaos and opisthodomos were in antis, with pilasters at the angles and two columns between, which, unlike those of the peristyle, have moulded bases. The high altar is a block of the ancient entablature. The font is a still more singular instance of the manner in which the early church divided the spoil of the conquered gods. It is said to have been a mixing bowl of the temple of Bacchus, which has been partly excavated behind S. Giovanni, and may have played a part in many a wild orgy before—thirteen centuries ago—it was sanctified to the mystical washing away of sin in the subterranean church of S. Marcian. It afterwards stood in the old cathedral of S. Giovanni, whence it was removed to the castle chapel of S. Giacomo; finally, as an inscription on the wall recalls, in 1695 Bishop Termini placed it here, once more among the columns of an Hellenic temple.

So much remains of the old temple, and so effectually have the remains been preserved by the very vandalism that has disguised and disfigured them, that from time to time a proposition is put forward that, by building a new cathedral, the right should be acquired to remove all post-Hellenic construction and, with a little judicious restoration, have a perfect temple of the earlier Doric period. I cannot help hoping that funds will never be forthcoming for such drastic archæology, and that if they be, the ecclesiastical authorities will decline to barter their birthright. The most splendid modern fane could not compensate the archbishop for the loss of the long, the more than apostolic, succession that is summarized in his cramped and uncouth church. He may derive a peculiar satisfaction from the thought that in all that extended use there has been nothing, so far as is known, that need shock or repel its latest ministrants ; that there has even been a singular and subtle congruity and continuity throughout the many phases of its history. If the conjecture be correct that the temple was founded by Gelon to commemorate the victory of Himera, which saved Sicily from the debasing rule and inhuman worship of the ancient enemies of Jehovah, the fact may seem to give a spiritual place to the Hellenic beside the Hebrew temple, and there is, at least, a happy coincidence in the predecessor of the Blessed Mother being, not one of the lawless and voluptuous deities, but the unsoiled maiden-goddess, inspirer of great thought and noble deed. That the later use is higher than the earlier, is

but to say that the Spirit is being given by measure to us. He were bold who should claim that the worship enshrined there to-day is wholly purged from dross, or has attained to open vision.

And, immeasurable though the advance has been, inestimable as is the gain, it needs but to look around in the cathedral to feel that something also has been lost. Art is one of the minor sacraments of the soul, and the votaries of St. Mary of the Pillars, who set her image on high in the fantastic porch, would be only gainers could they exchange the temper that delights in this profuse and vulgar decoration, and in the mean and tawdry ornament of the interior, for that which found expression in the serene and simple dignity of the Doric temple. Nay, more: would not our Christianity be richer and more effective—nearer to the measure of the stature of its founder—could it add to its usual presentment in our churches all that Athena connoted to the Hellenic world?

There seems an unkind fitness in the conjunction of these remains of classic architecture with the debased forms to which we give the name of classical revival, evoking 'the sense of something pagan risen again in the Renascence.' But, in truth, it was hardly a resurrection; in these hereditary lands of Roman use great Pan has never been really dead; the architecture evolved in countries having no culture but what was Christian passed in Italy under the classic spell. In this, as in much else, the old pagan spirit was never wholly cast out: in a legion forms it entered into and possessed

the body of regeneration, and bided its time, lurking beneath the altar, muttering ancient incantations in rite and festival, mingling immemorial melodies with chant and psalm, till, at the Renascence, its time came, and it stood forth, naked and unashamed, boldly took possession of the world and the church, and, after a brief, beautiful expression of human delight in nature and in knowledge, sank through grotesque, ignoble forms to the debased inanity in which we know it now.

No feature of the two styles—the classical revival and the classical remains—is more typical than the pillars. When we stand in front of Syracuse Cathedral and turn from the bolsterlike columns and overcharged capitals of the later construction, to mark the restrained majesty and subtle *entasis* of the earlier builders, we feel that these last were the expression of what must have been in some directions a spiritual, as well as an æsthetic, superiority ; that between the types of character of which each was the architectural output, and which, in turn, were satisfied and fostered by each, there is a great gulf fixed that the modern spirit would do well to recross if it can. For the elder and the later ideals are not conflicting but complementary : a larger synthesis than we have yet attained—such as the Italians of the sixteenth century vainly essayed—may some day combine them both.

That it is not Christianity that is at fault—that churchmen could once build churches as well as edifices more suited for marts or music-halls—is testified by

many noble relics among the poorer churches of Syracuse, which have been preserved by a happy obscurity and neglect, as S. Giovanni Battista—affectionately known among the populace as S. Giovanello—S. Martino, S. Tomaso, and S. Pietro, and the squalid, but noteworthy, chapel of the Mother of Miracles, shown in the sketch. The name commemorates the staying of the plague by the Blessed Mother on the intercession of S. Corsado, who arrived in the city when the epidemic was at its height, and, while it lasted, made his bed on a board on which is painted one of the begrimed and faded pictures in the little church. Very similar in ornamentation, though of somewhat earlier date, is the fine Porta Marina close by, almost the sole relic still standing of the medieval circumvallation. It was built under the Spanish domination, and recalls the 'silversmith work' of Spain.

The finest Gothic remains are, however, domestic, as the Montalto, Lanza, and Bellomi palaces—the latter happily declared a 'national monument,' and being gradually, as finance permits, converted into a museum of post-medieval art—and the all too scanty fragments that escaped the renovation of the Castle of Maniace by Charles V. Its lofty gateway is the most lovely piece of building in Syracuse: northern in form and detail, southern in its exquisite harmony of many-coloured marbles. In the same style is a window built up in the south-west wall. Within, are the remains of a noble vaulted hall with a fine chimney-piece. The castle occupies the narrow promontory of

sea-worn rock that juts out on the south of the island city, and, with the opposite promontory of Plemmyrion, forms the gateway of the Great Harbour. Between these two points was stretched the chain of ships that barred the escape of the hapless Athenians. The fine view of the harbour and its surroundings from the central tower supplements the view from Euryalos in reconstructing the scenes of the famous siege.

Examples of Renascence are, of course, much more numerous ; the most complete and pleasing is perhaps the Palazzo Bosco, erected just in time to escape baroco extravagance ; its restful proportions, the pleasant hue of its yellow-pink stone, the survival of some classical restraint in the freedom characteristic of the Renascence, render it an excellent example of a style whose excellence was all too short-lived. The graceful curving of the walls round its court is specially noteworthy. To the artist the most charming feature in the great building would probably be the back court, where, on a broad terrace of mouldering sculptured stone, is a little would-be classical pavilion with a domed roof of green and buff tiles, overgrown with small rock-plants, a delightful bit of mellow colouring.

You cannot lose your way in Syracuse without seeing enough odds and ends of architecture to illustrate a handbook, and having history made more real to you than could be done by a course of lectures. In seeing old cities it is a saving truth that he that loses his way shall find it, not, perhaps, find his way to that particular sight to which his guide-book was directing his steps,

but his way to a dozen other things that no guide-book could catalogue ; above all, his way to the heart and meaning—the broad expression—of it all, which is the harvest of travel most worth the garnering. This or that building, statue, arch or column are each nothing without the rest, and all are nought without the setting. In every historic land the most instructive monument of antiquity is not in stone and timber, but in the land itself which conditioned the history, and in the people whom the history has made. Throughout the common texture of Sicilian life and thought are strands stretching from the storied past. The groups in Syracusan streets and doorways, and in the roads and fields around, might have stepped out of an idyll of Theokritos ; Gorgo and Praxinoe still gossip, ejaculate, and squeeze their way among the crowds that throng Easter processions as they did among those that watched the celebration of the resurrection of Adonis ; goatherds and neatherds, as they lead or watch their flocks, pipe on reeds that might have served Thyrsis or Menaleas, and, it must be admitted, are still as redolent of their calling as the hapless swain whom Eunika—fastidious city-chit that she was—refused to kiss. And something from every intervening age, and from many far-lying lands, lives in popular ways and notions ; maidens hang their tresses beside the street-shrine of the Maiden Mother, as did the maidens of five centuries ago, as, perhaps, Hellenic maidens, twenty centuries earlier, hung theirs at the shrine of Artemis or Aphrodite ; common tools and pottery preserve classical or medieval forms ; odd-

rigged, quaint-named vessels rocking beside the quays recall the linking of strange peoples and periods by the Mediterranean; swart, corsairlike men in fezzes cease lading their lateen-sailed bark at the Moslem hour of prayer; on the high poop of a broad-beamed, archaic craft you will perhaps read ΑΡΓΩ-ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΥΣ, and feel inclined to go on board and inquire about the golden fleece from bronzed, lithe-limbed mariners talking together in all that time and use have left of the most famous speech 'ever moulded by the lips of man.'

CONVENT OF THE CAPUCCINI FROM
VILLA POLITI, SYRACUSE

XVIII

'SYRACUSA CONSOLATRIX'

Adjoining the cathedral is the Archbishop's Palace, a vast, rambling building enclosing courts and gardens. A large part of it has been devoted to a theological seminary, but on the only occasions that I entered it the inmates had been sent to their homes, and their quarters converted into a temporary hospital for some of crowd of victims of the earthquake who had been shipped from the ruined cities to Syracuse. In place of busy classes of scholars were vistas of pain and misery, human wreckage of the terrible earth-wave, lying stranded upon rows of iron beds. Many had been shattered beyond all hope of recovery; day by day cold and stiffening forms, whose sufferings the great deliverer had quieted, were carried out from among them.

Ungrudgingly and without reserve did the old ecclesiastical building give itself up to the work of humanity; even the chapel was made a storeroom, the floor covered with cases; provisions, medicaments, bandages, clothing, ranged ready for use; on the altar

were stacked soup-bowls and other crockery, as it were the shew-bread of the great teacher's lesson; the little church seemed doubly consecrated by the motley secular uses to which it was put.

In a large upper room, with miscellaneous ecclesiastical oddments ranged along its walls, were tailors collected from among the refugees, employed in making clothes to measure for some of the men-patients who were to be shortly released from bed, showing their work with artistic pride to all who looked in, cheerful and happy, in spite of destitution, bereavement, fright and exposure, as only children of the sun can be. In a basement room close by, a band of refugee shoemakers were similarly engaged; the machining necessary in the industry was, after the custom of the country, done by a woman, wife of one of the craftsmen. Both these groups of workers were paid by the American Red Cross, with whom, as well as with the admirably equipped and organized German Red Cross, the little English community, who had no corporate society of their own, co-operated.

Those were hard and anxious days in Syracuse. A large proportion of the population devoutly believed that the city had only been saved from destruction by its patron Santa Lucia, whose festival they had just celebrated with habitual effusion. The octave had ended at midnight on Sunday, December 27, only a few hours before the fatal forty seconds that hurried 200,000 human beings into eternity. I have seldom known so beautiful and brilliant a night as that was

at Syracuse. A vast crowd had lined the streets and quays as the silver image of the saint was carried to the cathedral from the church built on the scene of her martyrdom without the city, where it had sojourned during the festival. The ecclesiastical pomp of the procession had been punctuated by the usual strident and explosive manifestations in which southern devotion finds vent—brass bands and bombs, cannon, squibs, and crackers—and now the whole population seemed out of doors, giving themselves up to simple enjoyment. It was like a great family gathering; there was no rowdiness or horse-play, nor, though something like every tenth house was a drinking-shop, was there any approach to insobriety; innumerable hawkers vended *occietti*—the parched peas that are the symbol of the blinded maiden—and other mystic delicacies, everyone who had an instrument of music played it, every little group who could afford anything in the way of gunpowder let it off; in a thousand dazzling and deafening ways the affectionate devotion of the population to its sainted guardian flared and banged.

On the morrow the people believed that they owed their safety while they slept to the gratified saint. At about twenty minutes past four we had been aroused by shocks of earthquake which, though not of extraordinary violence, were so continuous and prolonged that one felt they could not have gone on many seconds more without bringing most buildings to the ground. These were followed by the long-drawn uproar of a great wave rolling southward, foaming far athwart the moonlit sea,

surging along, and over, the shore. Great part of the terrified population rushed out of doors, and remained there till daybreak, when everyone was surprised to find that neither earth nor sea had done much damage. Only a few walls were fissured, and some small boats floated inland. Then we learnt that rail and wire were interrupted to the north of us, and during the day vague rumours of a terrible disaster filtered in; the whole awful havoc was not known for days. The first authentic news came to us in grimly realistic fashion. On the morning of Tuesday, the 29th, a battered English merchant-vessel, laden with fugitives and wounded, steamed slowly into the harbour, and announced that Messina was no more. This was the 'Drake,' which, moored stem-on to the quay of the Marina, had been floated over it by the upheaved sea, her bows crashing through the American Bar in the first line of buildings, and then, with the frantic crowd that were trying to board her, had been swept with the receding water into the harbour.

This was but the first of many similar importations. Foremost in the work of rescue was the English training-ship 'Sutlej,' which happened to be at Syracuse when the news of the catastrophe came, and went under full steam to Messina, where she was the first warship to arrive.

The small crowded community who are packed within the little island city of Syracuse, and a few squalid suburbs on the mainland, their life stereotyped by oriental, medieval, and I know not what traditional

ways and conceptions, a community in which none were wealthy and the great majority of whom lived on the verge of want, were suddenly called on to receive and provide for nearly four thousand helpless persons, many horribly mutilated and requiring immediate surgical treatment; many more slightly injured, or so prostrated by illness and exhaustion that they could only be taken to some sort of hospital; all of them unnerved by terror, privation, and exposure, barely clothed, wholly destitute. I think that, on the whole, the manner in which the little city acquitted itself merits nothing but commendation; the very happy-go-luckiness and makeshiftiness of the population on the one hand, and fatalistic resignation and contentment on the other, helped to make the resulting achievement as sufficient to the day as could well have been expected.

The city and military hospitals were at once filled to overflowing, others were extemporized, doctors from the neighbourhood flocked in with the prompt devotion that characterizes their profession all over the world, gentlemen of the town volunteered as their assistants; of course, procedure was somewhat rough and ready, the provision of that which surgery has come to consider necessary was sadly deficient, and not always used when there, yet on the whole the treatment was singularly successful, as though Providence and happy southern psychology supplemented defective supplies and organization.

The city was very fortunate in its syndic, Signor Toscano, a capable, energetic man, of unfailing readi-

ness, kindness and tact, as free from red tape—the besetting danger of all official procedure in Italy—as bureaucratic tentacles would let him be. The archbishop, too, was a capable, broad-minded man, and the efforts of church and state were supported by the principal families in the town, among them the del Boscos, whose palace has been described above. The present baroness superintended the archbishop's hospital, and the dowager baroness supervised a crowd of needlewomen in the city hall. Though advanced in years, she was there from seven in the morning till often near midnight, almost always on her feet, providing material, and directing the multifarious work.

The large funds of the American Red Cross, of which Miss Davis, directress of a Female Reformatory in America, who was staying at Syracuse at the time, was made representative, and the smaller amount sent to me by friends,* were largely devoted to employing at wages such of the refugees as could make anything that was needed in supplying the wants of their fellow-sufferers. It was felt that of the dangers inherent in the situation not the least was contented pauperism and the contraction of habits of idleness. The tailors and shoemakers thus employed have been already mentioned. Miss Davis set a lot of unskilled labour to

* I should like here to express my gratitude for many and very generous donations from individuals, and for the sums sent me by the International Committee for Earthquake Relief of Montreux, by William Blakeney, R.N., the proceeds of a lecture that he gave at Vevey, and by the winter colony at Mont Pelerin through their chaplain, the Rev. Cooper Hunt.

work in much-needed mending of roads. Some eighty women, in addition to Syracusan workers, plied the needle in the city hall, and, when this became too crowded, my wife left it to the American ladies, collected women from among the refugees quartered in the suburbs, and kept them at work in two rooms placed at her disposal in the Villa Politi by Herr Kockel, the kind-hearted proprietor, whose wife co-operated in superintending the work. These were for some time engaged in fitting out the better-class, but wholly destitute, families, for whom the American Red Cross opened a convalescent home in the *Dépendance* of the hotel, afterwards in helping to provide for the mountain villages south of Messina, whose inhabitants, weeks after the catastrophe, were in most pitiable need of everything.

The acquaintance that our work gave us with the warm-hearted, anomalous Sicilian character, full of faults and fascination, of the artlessness of children and the arts of immemorial ancestors, hedged round with prescriptions, obsessions, diffidence, suspicion, unreserved in surrender once confidence was won, its vagaries and mystifications expressed with an unfailing and delicate grace of speech and manner, will always be a happy remembrance of an unhappy time.

It may be noticed that among the Red Cross missions of many nations no English have been mentioned. In truth we English were often in those days very jealous for our country. Red Cross organizations from European countries, and from distant America, flocked to

the stricken regions, each taking up some special work or some special group of sufferers ; but English sympathy had to be content with putting coins into offertories, posting cheques to the Lord Mayor's Fund, and sending out old clothes.

Of course, one must not forget the prompt and magnificent aid of the English navy. Also English consuls and vice-consuls, and private English men and women, did what they could in the individual manner of their country. None could have worked harder, or given up their house more unreservedly to the sufferers, than Mr. Lobb, our vice-consul at Syracuse. At Syracuse, too, was a golden-hearted Englishman, Ambroise Paré Brown, a name that is a household word throughout Sicily for fervid philanthropy. Among those who freely gave time, work, and belongings to the sufferers, were Mr. and Mrs. Greig, of the Sailors' Rest, founded by the lamented Charles Huleatt, and now unfortunately closed for lack of funds.

The German Red Cross, of which I saw most, was an admirable example of the advantage of having a permanent framework of organization ready to be applied on emergency. The branch at Syracuse was equipped with true Teutonic thoroughness, and was singularly fortunate in its chief, Dr. Kolmers, and his volunteer colleague, Dr. Weit. With them were two other physicians, trained nurses, and assistants. They installed themselves in some disused military barracks ; on one side of the yard were the wards, on the other

were storehouses in which was unpacked every conceivable necessary for man, woman, child, and baby.

The mission left a characteristic bequest behind them in the 'Borgo Augusta Victoria,' a canvas hamlet on the green, by the solitary column that marks the ancient Agora, which, besides meeting a great emergency, should be an object-lesson—by no means unneeded—in sanitation and domestic method to those who inhabited it. One tenement was fitted up as a chapel, where a priest of Syracuse came and ministered daily. Here on Quinquagesima Sunday, when the little settlement was formally handed over to the municipality by Dr. Kolmers, the archbishop celebrated divine service, and in an address from the altar dwelt on the singularly happy coincidence that the epistle for the day was St. Paul's eulogy of charity, verses, as he said, from the divine poem that underlies all our theology.

More expressive of the emotions of that terrible time than this spring-tide gathering, when life appeared settling to more or less normal conditions with silver linings to its clouds, had been the Mass celebrated for the repose of the departed on January 28—the Trigesima, as it was called, of the catastrophe—in the church of the Jesuits, the disrepair of the nave of the cathedral—ominously recalling another hecatomb of the restless earth—rendering it unsafe for congregational use.

The day was wild and dreary. A driving wind from the north draped the habitually radiant skies of Syracuse,

as though with funereal hangings from the hapless sister city, over which heaven had lowered and storms had swept almost without intermission since its great calamity ;

> The deep
> Moaned round with many voices,

and its waves, lashed into foam, rose wraithlike against rock and battlement. The church was closely packed with dark-clad mourners, its whited, soulless architecture shadowed to unwonted solemnity by the murk of the tempest and the sombre pageantry of death. Long dark palls, suspended from the arches, swelled and trailed and sank, shaken by the breath of the storm that howled without. On the threshold of the choir four huge candles flared and swaled at the corners of a black coffin, which stood for those entombed in the fallen cities, or whose broken bodies had been only brought thence to die. Lit by the tall tapers of the altar, a vast silver cross gleamed from the sable curtain stretched across the apse, seeming to symbolize the sufferings of humanity, bound, like its great archetype, to the inexorable framework of material torture. From the dim, incense-laden air beneath, the hollow chanting of the priests rose and fell and rose again, as though wailing man's protest against fate, and voicing his unconquerable hope. Then a golden cross, shining out of the shadows, wavering as on a storm-tossed sea, led a little band of black-robed, white-mitred prelates to the altar, where they offered the memorials of the great self-sacrifice, and commended to the infinite goodness

the souls that had been hurried unaware into its awful presence: *requiem eternam dona eis, Domine.* A ray of sunshine, struggling from the shrouded skies, distorted by the cloaked windows of the church, lit the gloom for a moment, flickered, and passed away. Finally, a priest of Messina, who had escaped the great destruction, appeared amid the funereal trappings of the pulpit, as though snatched from the jaws of death, told again to the hushed congregation the tale of horror and of heroism, and with the passionate speech and gesture of the south, enforced the everlasting lesson that robs the grave of its victory: 'The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

XIX

GREATER SYRACUSE

The island of Ortygia is now connected with the mainland by a broad bridge. On a rough bit of common, about a mile further on, is a stylobate bearing a single column of red marble and four Attic column-bases, the remains of an Agora of Roman times, which probably stood on the site of the historic Greek Agora.

It is strange to think that this mean, neglected spot was once the centre of the seething life of the vastest city of the ancient world, the scene of the great debates and keen polemics in which—here and in the mother cities of Hellas—political life as we know it was born. Here Ducetius sat silent while the question of his life or death was weighed in the unstable balance of popular opinion; here, in one of the most hopeless hours of Syracusan history, the people were gathered to discuss terms of surrender to the Athenians, when Gongylos, the Corinthian, hurried in from his ship and announced that help from the faithful mother city was on its way; here, some months after, the people were addressed by Gylippos, the splendid soldier who was

to save them, and the awe of the Spartan name did not suppress the titter of the frivolous citizens at his long, carefully combed hair; here the able and broad-minded Hermokrates gave his counsels, and here he was slain; here the great Timoleon recalled the degenerate democracy to the ideal of its founders; here the tyrants beguiled the populace with prescriptive democratic procedure, while their mercenaries were massed close at hand, in case the specious farce should be taken seriously.

Close to the Agora, about a quarter of a mile outside the fiscal cordon of the present city, is the Rotonda, one of the most casual and busy spots in Syracuse, where carts from the country unload and vend miscellaneous wares, leaving it to the purchasers to negotiate, or evade, the insensate dazio, with which Syracuse, in common with other Italian towns, strangles its natural resources. A few minutes from this, near a fine fragment of the old wall, Cavallari in 1864 excavated extensive and most interesting remains of several periods, commencing with early Greek building in limestone, the blocks so deftly squared and exactly adjusted as to be independent of cement; superimposed on, and, no doubt, also largely ousting and replacing this, is clumsier Roman construction in marble, mortared and lead-clamped. Professor Orsi considers that here was the Timoleonteion, the Palaistra that grateful Syracuse raised as a perpetual memorial to her liberator. Near it, if not on the very spot, was his tomb. The Romans are said to have had here a

library and a school of rhetoric, to which the later remains belong.

Through twenty centuries its marbles have been plundered for church and palace; its solid material was taken in more wholesale fashion for the fortifications of Charles V., and, in our own day, the choicest remains have been garnered in the museum, but many finely sculptured fragments of ceiling, architrave and cornice, and interesting examples of Greek and Roman masonry, remain. By half a century of careless gardening nature has healed the scars of excavation, and hidden every evidence that the peaceful little nook has been scooped out of the plains by the restless hand of man; within a few steps of the unlovely, high-walled road, we find ourselves in a green basin, dotted with white marble, carpeted with flowery sward, and flecked with shining water, shut away from the banality and squalor around by the straight banks of excavation mantled with ivy and mesembryanthemum. The depression of this part of the coast has deprived the water filtering down to the sea of its natural outlet, and springs seep up in court and pavement where once thronged the youthful life of a vast city. On the floor of the old lecture-theatre a clear pool is set as a mirror which reflects the tiers of marble benches that half encircle it, the green flower-bejewelled bank beyond, the blue heaven and wind-chased clouds above. By a happy inspiration, which can afford to be entirely independent of archæology, it has been named Diana's bath. One half expects to see the huntress goddess—

bow in hand and tunic looped above the knee, her eyes alert and eager with the chase—appear against the sky, on the edge of the green rim that shuts us round, and, stepping lightly down grassy bank and marble steps, lay aside robe and quiver, and lave her strong, white limbs.

But the Palaistra, connected as it appears undoubtedly to be by situation, and perhaps by some of its actual construction, with the Timoleonteion, needs no aid from idle fancy in its appeal to the imagination. Syracuse did well to associate this centre of her social and civic life with the most memorable name in her history. In the crowded past of Sicily there is no such noble figure as that of Timoleon, the Corinthian. Commencing life under the cloud of his mother's curse for having consented to the death of his brother, who was aiming at tyranny; looked askance at by his fellow-citizens who, though they thought that tyrants should be withstood, and, if need be, slain, were shocked at a brother having a part in it; nominated, as though in ordeal, to lead a handful of adventurers and mercenaries against the tyrants, in response to an appeal from the crushed commonwealths of Sicily; his career reads like an epic of freedom rather than sober history. It is small wonder that he was looked on as a divine deliverer whom the stars in their courses fought for, that the torch of the awful goddesses was seen guiding his bark to their island, and the dread fire-god of Etna taking part in his war against tyranny.

Still more marvellous seemed his march into the

heart of barbarian Sicily, to forestall the invasion of the secular foes of his faith and people. Carthage had mustered what appeared overwhelming forces to crush the liberated commonwealths, and sent with them her treasured reserve, the 'sacred band' of nobles, who were not to be staked in battle except in the extremest need of the state, and who by the blood-stained stream of Krimisos gave their lives in vain against the little company crowned with wild celery, with whom Timoleon, descending through the morning mist, fell upon them at the passing of the waters, while the gods of Hellas cast lightning and hail in their faces, and swept them away with the swollen river. Never yet had Hellene smitten Canaanite with such utter rout and slaughter, nor taken such store of plunder. Great gifts were made to the faithful gods, and a share of the spoil was dutifully sent to the mother state, the beautiful city between the gulfs, that never ceased to concern herself in the fortunes of her children.

Like all saviours of the world, Timoleon came not to do his own will, and sought not his own glory, and was rewarded by a larger sovereignty and more abundant honour than any that can be won by arts or arms. Towards the close of his active career, he was the uncrowned king of all Sicily as none had ever been before; distant states that owed him no allegiance, and were traditionally hostile to Syracuse, sought his guidance, and acted on his advice.

Then, when the task that he had set himself was done, he laid down an authority that was absolute and

unquestioned, and became a simple citizen of the state that he had made. But no abdication could dethrone him from the hearts of the people. In grave crises, and when difficult questions or deep divisions beset the state, they turned for counsel to the aged liberator, and the foremost citizens contended for the honour of bearing his litter into the theatre. When the enthusiasm that greeted his appearance had quieted, he gave to the hushed assembly his opinion and advice. Sometimes one was found who withstood him, and then he said that his heart's desire was fulfilled, for now he knew that Syracuse was a free city, in which men might speak the thing they would. If from this honoured tomb, he, being dead, could yet have spoken, in many a dark day that came, the fate of the faction-rent, tyrant-ridden city might have been different.

There is a notable group of ancient remains about a mile from this. The first that we come to is the Roman amphitheatre, a huge ellipse hewn in the rock, supplemented with masonry on the south and east, where the hill descends. The vast structure, larger than that at Verona, is said to have remained almost intact till the time of Charles V., who requisitioned all the movable stone for his fortifications.

Adjoining this is the great altar, supposed to be that mentioned by Diodoros as a stadion in length. This is somewhat longer, 660 feet, with a width of 73 feet. The substructure, consisting of three enormous steps surmounted by a boldly moulded plinth, like the stylobate of a temple, remains tolerably perfect. On

the north, near the road, this is hewn in the native rock; the extension on the south is built of large square blocks of unmortared stone that it is astonishing Charles V.'s gangs of devastators should have overlooked. There is little doubt that the altar was used for the sacrifice of the 450 oxen slaughtered at the annual festival of the Eleutheria, instituted to commemorate the liberation of the city from the tyrant Thrasyboulos, 466 B.C. Here was found a colossal head, no doubt that of Zeus Eleutherios, now in the museum; a robust, truly jovial face, of exuberant vitality, framed in luxuriant curly hair and beard, with proud lips and large imperial gaze, that seem to put cramping tyranny and craven servitude alike to scorn.

The mutilated remains of these two enormous structures, once devoted to bloodshed and suffering, are now a perfect picture of tranquil decay, the grey mouldering stone draped with shining ivy and mantling masses of pink-starred mesembryanthemum, and enamelled with a hundred variegated hues of flower, fern and foliage.

Soon after this we come to the view given in the sketch of the Greek theatre and the street of tombs beyond it. The theatre dates probably from the fifth century B.C., and, after those of Miletos and Megalopolis, is the largest of which remains exist. In plan it is a half circle of 500 feet diameter, with a tangential prolongation at each end. Forty-six semicircular tiers of seats, hewn in the rock of the hill, still remain, and traces can be seen of fifteen others; the eleven lower tiers were veneered with marble. Eight narrow flights

THE THEATRE AND STREET OF
TOMBS, SYRACUSE

of steps, radiating up from the flat half circle of the forestage, divided this great benched hollow into nine wedge-shaped sections; horizontally it was divided into three parts by a very narrow lower, and a wider upper, semicircular gangway. On the wall of the upper one are Greek inscriptions, which, it is supposed, give the name by which each section was distinguished, such as Zeus Olympieios, King Hieron, Queen Philistides, Queen Nereidos. The use of the terms king and queen in the latter days of a state, so long the sport of demagogues and tyrants, is notable. The imperial Vandal, Charles V., is credited with the destruction of the stage. In the mutilated foundations that remain it is thought there are indications of some theatrical machinery having been installed beneath it.

In spite of time and barbarism, the noble ruin remains a very impressive monument of one of the most characteristic features of Greek life in its most glorious days. The traveller should try to see it in some of the more dramatic hours of the twenty-four. The prospect is very beautiful, and strangely different, at sunrise and sunset, very lovely, too, on moonlight nights, when the limestone gleams white, the destructions and additions of time alike 'share the erasure of the day,' twinkling lights are massed in the island city, and scattered over the great harbour. The theatre being hewn in the living rock, ruin is a slow process; the defacements of twenty centuries appear little more than superficial, and imagination conjures up the great days that are passed. The pavement of the stage and

its simple decorations are gone, but the space where the actors trod is clearly defined, and the seats of the spectators are much the same now as then ; above all, the natural decoration, which that supremely artistic race deemed essential to the setting of their dramas, remains unchanged. Still, behind the stage, under the wide canopy of the sky, lie stretched the spacious plain, the long, low hills, the landlocked sea. As one sits on these worn, white benches of rock, the heart is hot within one to think that there, on that little flat space below, the great Greek dramas were enacted by men to whom the completest expression that human lips have ever found for human thought was as a familiar mother-tongue, that Æschylus himself is said to have recited there his intense and burning lines, that, closely packed on those benches where we are, men sat and heard the immortal words with the intimate appreciation that only the living users of a language can have. What would not scholars give to know the exact meaning that disputed phrases conveyed to many a common fellow that lounged here.

Beside those immutable masterpieces, how ephemeral seems even the strong structure that was made for their representation. These solid seats and floors will moulder at length into indistinguishable oneness with the hillside wherein they are hewn, but the dramas for which they were made will still live, divine and incomparable, supreme achievements of the human mind, to which generation after generation will turn for inspiration and delight.

On this spot, too, it is said the aged people of Syracuse gathered on the most fateful day in the city's annals, and watched a sterner drama than even Æschylus ever put upon the stage. In the bay below, they beheld the two greatest navies the world had then seen meet in battle array. They saw their manœuvring and onset; ships scattered, sinking, stranded; the water churned into bloody surf by the stroke of close-banked oars, strewn with wreckage, dotted with drowning men and floating corpses, the sacrifice of a fratricidal strife. To the shouts of command and the din of furious combat were added cries of encouragement and defiance from the armies on shore, which, in the figure of the Greek chronicler, accompanied the fluctuating tide of battle like the surging of a dramatic chorus. Through the long day women and old men stood here in an agony of helpless inactivity, watching the fortunes of their city, and the lives and liberty of its people, wavering in the balance, till at length a wail of despair went up from the soldiers of Athens, doomed by the defeat of their fleet to slaughter and slavery, or the slow torment and starvation of the latomia. No irony of fate pictured by the poets transcends in tragedy the insensate strife that rent the Hellenic family into ineffective fragments, and delivered over western civilization to be bound to the chariot-wheels of Rome.

It is this close connection with the civic life of a great state that invests the theatre at Syracuse with an interest that no mere dramatic association could give; on this rock-hewn floor Timoleon's litter rested,

on these close-set benches the crowded citizens, whom he had restored to man's estate, hung with affectionate deference on his words.

Behind the theatre is the singular 'street of tombs,' a street that is a winding, straight-walled trough, cut some 15 feet down into the rock, its surface grooved with wheel-ruts, its sides hollowed into burial chambers, and incised with niches for memorial tablets, which have disappeared.

About three miles to the west of this is Euryalos, the great fortress built by Dionysios, 402-397 B.C., on the point which, after Syracuse outgrew its island cradle, was always of vital importance to it. A large part remains very much as it was originally hewn in the rock, or built upon it, and enables us to appreciate the vastness and completeness of the design. Cut in the solid limestone are underground chambers for barracks, stores and stables, passages for retreat, refuge, surprise, or for turning the position of an enemy who might have gained a footing in the first or second of the three lines of defence. From the towers above we have the whole country spread out before us like a map, and can see how troops posted here could note every move in or around the city, and descend to any point where they were needed; how a garrison of citizens could watch an investing force and baffle every attack, and a besieger, once he had won here, could survey the city in his toils, and anticipate every sally.

It is a delightful walk from here along the remains of the great wall of Dionysios, which followed the

SPRING AT SYRACUSE. VIEW OF ETNA
AND THAPSOS FROM SITE OF TYCHE

rugged spurs and recesses of the northern escarpment. One realizes how hopeless must have seemed the task of Marcellus as he looked up to it from Thapsos, which lies gleaming, almost enisled, in the blue bay beneath. The wall can be traced all along, and in some places considerable portions remain, the huge blocks, many of them over 4 feet long, still resting as deft Greek hands had laid them, squared and adjusted with an exactitude that had no need of mortar. In other places they have tumbled down, either from earthquake or from the subsidence of the dissolved limestone below, and lie strewn or piled in chaotic ruin. Below the grey, fretted cliff are groves of olive, the grassy slopes beneath them abundantly wild-flowered. A stony plain lies beyond between hills to left and sea to right, and merges into green and haze as it stretches to the dark flanks of snow-capped Etna. After about three miles, we come to the fine Greek road that descended from the plateau to the plain, now known as the Scala Greca. Near it are some good specimens of Sikel tombs of the early period, and a cave-temple thought to have been sacred to Artemis.

The crumbling western gable, with a fine rose window, of the dilapidated Church of S. Giovanni, once the cathedral, rises conspicuous above the lemon and orange groves that border the Catania road. A sketch shows its southern porch, a beautiful specimen of Sicilian Gothic, so little appreciated by its curators that in the course of repairs a capital has been put on upside down. Near it are extensive remains of a temple of

Bacchus, many parts of which have been embodied in the church.

Steps descend to the venerable Church of S. Marcian, hewn in the rock below, believed to contain the tomb of the saint, who was a convert of S. Peter and first Bishop of Syracuse, and received S. Paul, who is said to have preached in this church. The church is certainly not old enough for that, but is one of the oldest in Christendom. Führer, though sceptical of the apostolic date of S. Marcian, thinks there is no reasonable doubt that he was martyred on the massive granite column that stands to the north of the principal apse, and that he was buried in an arched recess cut in the rock on the south.

The damp-stained, moss-grown walls are covered with relics of frescoes, mostly archaic, with Greek inscriptions. One over some little mortuary niches represents two of the buried children among birds and flowers in paradise.

Passing through the remains of the temple of Bacchus, we enter the vast subterranean city of the dead, known as the catacombs of S. Giovanni. It is divided into two by a main gallery running east and west; other galleries branch off north and south, and from these again narrow lanes; all are chambered on either hand with tombs; where the main galleries cross are large domed chambers, with much architectural fashion, which evidently were once used as chapels, and were lit by shafts to the upper air. The full extent of this strange labyrinth of tunnels, which are on several levels,

PORCH OF S. GIOVANNI, SYRACUSE

one beneath the other, has never been ascertained. Near the entrance is evidence that the nucleus was a subterranean aqueduct of pre-Christian date, to which the shafts that now give light to the upper level were sunk as wells.

The cells have been so often pillaged and defaced that but scanty traces now remain of the painting, mosaic and sculpture that once adorned them. The beautiful sarcophagus of Adelphia, now in the museum, was found here. Such paintings as remain do not show the allegorical use of heathen myths, nor, with a few exceptions, of Old Testament history, that so often in the catacombs of Rome reminds us that the new wine had been put into very old bottles. The memorial inscriptions are short, simple commendations of the deceased, words of sorrow, faith, or hope, of farewell and Godspeed, or a prayer for the departed soul. There is a significant absence of record, usually so ample in pagan epitaphs, of rank, office, or worldly position. Death had set its final seal to the charter of the new faith, which was alike to high and low, rich and poor, bond and free. Nor is there often the date of birth and death; only now and then, and that usually in the case of the young, of the length of life. What was his little span of time to the heritor of eternity?

We can hardly imagine any gatherings more impressive than those of the little companies of the faithful to hear the words of life in these shadowy realms of death. When the living, whom any chance word of friend or

foe might hurry among the dead, met amid the quiet ranks of those whose warfare was accomplished, and the symbols of the mortal body of the risen Lord were handed round, it must have seemed that the grave in its very stronghold was robbed of its victory, and the partition of mortality done away.

This is but one of the catacombs of Syracuse, which extend under all the southern slopes of Achradina, and have been but imperfectly explored. Many, no doubt, are not even suspected. To the east of the Capuchin convent are many small detached catacombs, thought to have belonged to families or guilds. Then comes a very curious one, in which Christian symbolism is mingled with that of a gross nature-worship. Between this and S. Giovanni spreads the most notable group, one of which has been noticed above.

The great interest of catacombs is as monuments of early Christianity. These brief inscriptions and artless symbols are the expression of Christian sentiment before it had enunciated a formal creed, or fixed the canon of its sacred writings. The most ancient of churches is modern beside many of these subterranean shrines, belongs to a period when the fight was o'er, the victory won, and creed and cult had crystallized into definitive forms that have changed little to the present day. But the earlier catacombs take us back to a time of martyrdom and low estate, when danger lurked in all the relations of life, a time, too, of unstereotyped dogma and ritual, the time, in fact, of that primitive Christianity, which the churches professedly desire to recover, but

which, could we know it as these gloomy galleries knew it, might be found extremely unsettling.

A striking contrast to these sombre aisles are the latomie, or quarries, from which the materials for the great city were taken, and which are now among the strangest and loveliest things in the neighbourhood of Syracuse. The Syracusans got the stone they wanted by cutting perpendicularly down into the platform of rock on which they were building, and the straight-walled pits, a hundred feet or so in depth, are to-day great sunken gardens, where the protection from wind, and the reflected and concentrated heat, have forced vegetation into a rank luxuriance.

A sketch shows the largest, the most historically famous, and, on the whole, the most beautiful, of these latomie, that of the Capucini, a vast irregular pit, with arms, bays, and windings. Here and there stone which, for one reason or another, did not commend itself to the quarrymen, has been left, and stands in huge isolated towers, their barren tops crowned with prickly-pear, a fringe of which hangs down over the edge. Their sides and those of the enclosing cliffs, and of huge fallen blocks, have been carved by the chemistry of the weather into fantastic forms that often have the guise of human architecture; sometimes the surface is so fretted, perforated, and underwrought that it looks like gigantic folds and mantles of lace. In places the sides have been variously fashioned by man when the depth was less than it is now: high in the face of the cliff we see tombs with stony bed and pillow, deep-cut recesses,

stranded stairs. Vegetation of some kind has taken advantage of every ledge and fissure; the ubiquitous prickly-pear has established itself wherever it can get a footing; fig-trees grasp the precipice with snaky roots, and suspend broad-leaved garlands; ivy, rose, honeysuckle, clematis, hang their variegated tapestry.

Below, the paths wind through a maze of exuberant vegetation, amid archways, caverns, bold buttresses and deep bays, huge fallen fragments and piled masses of rock. The ground beneath the wide-flung branches is carpeted with wild-flowers, and casual patches of vegetables. Any spot unutilized is occupied by the inevitable prickly-pear, the hardiest and most independent, yet most forlorn and helpless looking of plants; it finds its way everywhere, but has nothing enterprising in its air; it looks as though it had wandered up precipices, and established itself on crags in a fit of absence of mind. As easily contented is the geranium, the congenial and contrasted associate that trellises its grisly growth with velvety leafage starred with crimson, masses itself in banks and hedges, or pours cascades of soft foliage and bright blossom over parapet and terrace.

Most enchanting is the latomia when the moon bathes it with her magic, giving to the furrowed limestone a new, strange architecture of light and shade, massed in large effects of luminous white and solid blackness, and flooding the shadowy caverns and recesses, arching groves and winding alleys, gleaming stems and shining foliage with mystery and glamour.

It is sad to think of this sweet, embowered spot as a shadeless valley of death, yet the latomia is associated with one of the most cruel memories of the wars of Greek with Greek. Such of the survivors of the disastrous Athenian expedition as were not immediately distributed as slaves were imprisoned here, and no further heed taken of them than to serve out daily half of a slave's ration per man. Here, where no vegetation then tempered the scorching reflected heat or gave shelter from cold and rain, 7,000 proud citizens of the state that has given the world the noblest examples of what man and his life can be, dragged out their wretched days, a prey to hunger and thirst, heat and cold, illness and nakedness, tottering and crawling in a living death amid whitening skeletons and corpses in every stage of putrefaction, till at length an emaciated remnant were taken out and sold as slaves. Sometimes as I wander through the lovely labyrinths that now fill their prison-tomb, I seem to see it stripped of its verdure, a dreary, stench-laden pit of destruction, crowded again with that ghastly population, in which the dead were ever more and more, and those for whom the bitterness of death was past were daily fewer.

The main entrance to the latomia is by a charming time-worn, verdure-clad terrace that slopes down to it in leisurely zigzags from the Capuchin convent, now an almshouse. The Villa Politi has a private stairway that descends to it from amid beds of delicately odoured stocks, and banks of marguerite, rosemary, and geranium.

Close to this is a statue of Rebecca Politi, to whose enthusiasm, taste, and energy were originally due the Villa Hotel and its lovely grounds, which Herr Kockel, the present owner, has in his turn improved—an hotel which the hurried traveller longs to linger in, and which those who know it stay in as a home. She could not purchase the latomia, which is a 'national monument,' but she acquired a right of user over it, and bought the land all round, save only that over which the convent spreads its venerable and picturesque bulk. On the opposite edge of the latomia, with the vast sunken garden stretched between, she built a modest villa, which by successive additions has grown to the present large, irregular building, but has never lost its character of a villa rather than an hotel, an unhomely term that she always deprecated. The ground surrounding the latomia, which she found a bare plateau, she transformed into a rambling garden, full of nooks and bowers, a sanctuary of singing birds, a paradise for children, where they can play and wander and wonder, be hidden and found again, through bright winter hours; where their elders can find quiet nooks, such as I write in now, or may lounge and stroll, watching the pageant of the day, from the rising of the sun out of the eastern sea to its setting behind the long, purple Cremiti hills.

It is a delightful boating excursion across the harbour and up the Anapo and Cyane to La Pisma. The latter stream meanders through the flat, fertile plain, fringed with thickets of papyrus and tangled briar, and here

and there overarched by trees ; through the gaps are seen lush, flowery pastures, in which cattle stand knee deep. Finally we emerge into the broad, deep, azure pool fabled to be the fountain of tears into which Cyane, the playmate of Persephone, was transformed in the cleft where her adored young goddess had disappeared.

On a low, platform-like, limestone hill near the junction of the two streams are the ruins of the Olympieion, the great hexastyle, peripteral temple of Zeus. Only two columns are standing, but all the stylobate can be traced. The remains show that it was of the most archaic type, probably dating from the sixth century B.C. The flat hill, on which goats now browse among abundant flowers, is a strategically placed natural camp, from which kindred and alien foes—Nikias, Himilkon, Hamilkar, Marcellus—have watched the great harbour and the vast city that fringed the long escarpment rising across the plain.

It is a pleasant drive round the edge of the harbour to Isola, the ancient Plemmyrion. The windswept promontory is still the 'Plemmyrium undosum' of Virgil. The surf rises against the cliffs in tall white towers, that bend over and fling themselves across the land in great cataracts of spray. The views across the harbour from the road and the promontory are often very striking ; the pale, closely packed houses of Syracuse rise behind the fringe of hulls and masts within the harbour, and the tawny, medieval battlements at its entrance. In the background, the long, bare plateau,

on which stood the group of great cities that have wholly passed away, slopes up from the cave-studded cliffs of Achradina to the heaped ruins of Euryalos. Beside the intense, solid blueness of the sea, the land and buildings seem thin and immaterial, things compacted of light and cloud. I once saw them transfused with iridescent hues by the sun refracted through the spray of a passing shower, like the apocalyptic city whose gates were of pearl, and its building of gold, jasper, and the sardine stone.

The whole promontory is honeycombed with primeval tombs, some of which have yielded a singular memorial of the last great battles of the Athenian invasion. The unhappy Athenians could give neither time nor thought to the burying of their dead, a sacred duty that Greeks only omitted in the direst extremity, and always allowed a Greek enemy the opportunity of performing. The Syracusans, though they felt under no obligation to give their slaughtered invaders seemly interment or funeral rites, could not for their own sake leave the multitude of corpses to infect the air. A way of disposing of them lay ready to hand in the tombs around, where the elder people of the land had lain for a thousand years or more beside the rude pottery that held the food and drink placed near them when they were laid to rest. The grave acquaints men with strange bedfellows : these tombs were now crammed as full as they could hold with Athenian corpses, the slabs again fitted to the openings, and there for two and twenty centuries cultured Greek and savage

LATOMIA DEI CAPUCCINI FROM VILLA
POLITI, SYRACUSE

Sikel mouldered in a common corruption, till archæologists of our own day sorted out the later intruders by contemporary coins found with their bones.

It is a pleasant, though somewhat tedious railway-trip from Syracuse to Modica and Ragusa. Modica covers the bottom and climbs one side of a ravine; a great castle is perched on a limestone crag above it; in the church of Sta. Maria di Betlem is a beautiful Gothic chapel. The twin cities of Ragusa, connected by a picturesque lane of steps that wind up between houses, rocks, and shrines, are very finely situated. In a yard of lower Ragusa is a gateway of St. George, a fine example of Sicilian Gothic, the only relic of the old cathedral destroyed by the earthquake of Easter Day, 1693, which also brought down the roof of the cathedral of Syracuse on the crowded congregation.

Near Ragusa are large quarries of asphalt in mid-Miocene limestone, where it occurs in layers, sometimes extending over a hundred vertical feet. The largest of these quarries is worked by an English company, of which Mr. A. P. Brown is the manager. It seems to me that our country is peculiarly fortunate in the men that represent it in industrial enterprise in Sicily. Mr. Brown at this end of the island, and Mr. Whitaker at the other, and many less known, stand for all that is broad, righteous, and sympathetic in the organization and employment of labour.

It may be patriotic prejudice that makes a trip to Malta seem one of the pleasantest excursions to be made from Syracuse. It is an agreeable surprise to

find in mid-Mediterranean the familiar embarrassment of our archaic coinage and measures, and the old-world atmosphere that enwraps an English community wherever it may be ; civilization seems expressed in foot-pounds and Fahrenheit, and has the comfortable conviction that no foreigner can make head or tail of it. One would hardly be startled on turning any corner at meeting the lion and the unicorn, or St. George and the dragon. Valetta—a miniature volume of later European history as Syracuse is of earlier—is not only the most picturesque of Mediterranean cities, but has solved the problem of being picturesque and yet being clean. Perhaps history will record among the minor labours of the weary Titan that she cleansed a Mediterranean seaport.

XX

PANTALICA

Among the strangest and most profoundly interesting things in the neighbourhood of Syracuse are the various groups of prehistoric tombs hollowed in the hills and cliffs, so numerous and so carefully made that they were long looked upon as troglodytic dwellings. These, and similar necropolises scattered about Sicily, are the more mysterious and interesting because they and their contents are the sole existing record of the people—Sikans, Elymians, and Sikels, to use the terms current in history—that made them.

Till lately we have thought that we could safely docket and pigeon-hole all that we knew, or could ever know, about these early inhabitants of Sicily; but Professor Sergi of Rome and Professor Orsi of Syracuse, in exploration of the prehistoric tomb, have made sad havoc in the prehistoric pigeon-hole, with the result that we know both much less and much more on the subject than was once thought possible. Reference has been already made to the revision of received ideas that this school of anthropologists claim to make on grounds that cannot

be lightly waived. Substantially, on the negative side, it denies that there is any distinction such as, following Thucydides and the older writers, we have assumed between Sikan, Elymian, and Sikel. At the most it will only allow these terms as indicating different stages of development, possibly different waves of the same people, with the caution that, thus used, they may be unmeaning or misleading. On the other hand, it has thrown a flood of light on the gradually evolved or acquired civilization of this earliest and largest factor of the population of Sicily.

For this prehistoric people, whatever and whencever they were, are undoubtedly the vastly preponderating element in Sicilian ancestry. Through the long centuries during which Phœnicians were establishing coastal trading stations, and Greeks were founding seaside colonial cities; later, when Rome sent her pro-consuls and Byzantium her exarchs; when the Saracens occupied the towns and ruled the country from them; when these were ousted by the Normans, and the land parcelled out into feudal baronies; later still, when Frenchmen, Spaniards, and what not—for a short time, and in his usual anomalous manner, the inevitable Briton—reigned at Palermo, down to the present day, when the island forms an ill-assimilated portion of united Italy, the Sikels were that rural population which in every country is the main anthropic basis, and which is substantially untouched by strategic conquest, commercial or social supremacy, changes of government or forms of administration.

But this anthropic preponderance is often singularly without historic expression. The first authentic accounts of the Sikel are that of an already vanishing nationality. Either from native disposition, loose organization, or backward political development, they appear to have been singularly lacking in individuality and self-assertion. The career of the one national leader they produced—the brilliant Ducetius—has been already mentioned. With him passed away all possibility that may have ever existed of a Sikel nationality. In truth, the issue had already been decided by deeper and more persistent forces than can be arrayed in war. The Hellenic genius, which racial cleavage and alien temper divested of all appeal to the Phœnician, had cast its spell over the more kindred Sikel, and battle did but set its seal to the more potent spiritual conquest. The sun that was rising out of the Eastern sea upon Syracuse, when Ducetius rode down to the Agora and flung himself as a suppliant upon the altar, saw, as in dramatic allegory, the final submission of the Sikels to a sovereignty that they had never seriously contested. By the end of the fourth century B.C. their very language had passed away, and their religion, which, with language, is at once the most appealing symbol, and the most constraining bond of ethnic independence, had put on the forms and fashion of the Greek. With that subtle, universal touch by which Hellenism still rules our spirits, the invading worship had enshrined itself in the ancient holy places of the island, and given its own graceful and poetic presentment to native myth

and local legend. When, a hundred years later, the sullen tide of Roman conquest rolled across the straits, it found throughout Sicily an apparently homogeneous population, superficially Greek, but substantially Sikel.

Materials are singularly lacking for information regarding this preponderating factor in the island population : a few dark legends of the under-world, whose fierce and fitful forces lurk so close to Sicilian life, survive of Sikel beliefs, but there is no fragment of masonry which we can say is a relic of a temple raised for their worship ; no fort nor earthwork which may have afforded them protection against tribal raids, or opposed an unavailing rampart to the invader ; the little Sicilian ploughshare unearths no ruins of their homes ; the coins which preserve the names of their cities only testify to the effacement of their language and civilization by that of Greece. It has been thought that their purely agricultural occupation, and their happy relations among themselves, may be an explanation of the absence—with one doubtful exception, presently noticed—of substantial building ; strange though it seem, the population was probably more normally distributed over the island in those very dark ages than it ever has been since, and offered a pleasing contrast to the congestion in towns that modern civilization has achieved. Possibly their peaceful unmolested life and primitive agriculture resulted in semi-nomadic conditions. Shifting their home from time to time to fresh land, while that from which they had taken crops lay fallow, they enjoyed

the proverbial happiness of the people that have no history—a happiness from which the Sicily of authentic annals has been singularly free—tradition is almost silent regarding them, and records are restricted to a few scanty notices in writings concerned with other things.

For the last twenty years, however, Signor Paolo Orsi, the accomplished director of the museum at Syracuse and superintendent of excavations throughout the province, has devoted himself to the examination of the numberless clusters of Sikel tombs in the neighbourhood—veritable cities of the dead—and has, as it were, wrung from the jaws of death more information about these remote and unremembered ancestors of the Sicilian than all that antiquity has bequeathed to us.

The most imposing display of Sikel tombs in Sicily is at Pantalica, near Sortino, some twelve miles from Syracuse. About a mile above their junction, the river Anapo and its tributary the Calcinara almost enclose a steep-sided mass of limestone known as the mountain of Pantalica, which rises above the encircling plateau, like a huge natural fortress, moated all round except at one point, where a narrow isthmus of rock connects it with the surrounding country. For centuries it has been visited, examined and sketched, but always with the preconception that it had been a city of cave-dwellers. Unfortunately, antiquarians and artists have not been the only visitors. It has been exhaustively ransacked for imaginary treasure, and the disappointment of unsuccessful seekers has been wreaked on the

fragile vessels, which, had they known it, would have been worth more to them than the gold they sought. Pottery of unique archæological value has been smashed to atoms in chagrin at not finding it full of coins. Professor Orsi in 1893 and 1897 organized expeditions that explored the rocks with results that he has recorded in his monograph, 'Pantalica e Cassibile,' to which, as well as to his other writings and to his conversation, I am largely indebted in touching on a subject that he has made his own.

There are estimated to be something like 4,000 mortuary cells, mainly comprised in three groups: the necropolis of Filiporto, near the isthmus-like ridge on the west of the mountain, and the northern and southern necropolises; the three exhibit examples of nearly every kind of Sikel sepulchre, from the tiny primitive cell, into which the corpse had to be crammed doubled up, to the elaborate family mausoleum, with couches radiating round a central hall, known as Sepulchre 56. The crowded burial of the earliest period is, however, rare. The circular and elliptical forms characteristic of the first and second Sikel periods predominate. In the course of the second period the rectangular form comes into vogue, first in chambers that seem destined for the chiefs, corresponding perhaps to a difference in the form of their huts; the new shape was perhaps a distinction of the more important personages, and gradually became the fashion till, in the third period, it was, we may conclude from the tombs, the general style for the dwellings of the

GATEWAY AT TAORMINA

whole tribe. A singular feature of the early tombs is a flint knife by the head of the deceased ; the practice persisted after the introduction of bronze, but was not so universal. Petersen suggests that the pocketless Sikels had the habit of sticking these small knives in their matted hair, and carried them thus to the grave. The mortuary annals of Pantalica are almost wholly coeval with the Bronze Age of the region. Only the earliest and least represented periods can be assigned to the Stone Age, and iron is entirely absent.

The usual approach to Pantalica is most impressive : in front the clear waters of the Calcinara flow between straight walls of rock, broken only by the steep descent on either side to the ford. Beyond this, like a moated fortress, the huge mass of limestone rises in a succession of precipices, separated by narrow, grassy terraces, the faces of the rock studded with small dark openings, like port-holes for guns, which are the entrances of the tombs. This is the northern necropolis, which contains Sepulchre 56, already mentioned. An entrance passage leads to a trapezoidal hall, from which short tunnels in two rows, some of them still showing the traces of the masonry with which they were closed, give access to eleven cells.

Like so many other tombs of all kinds and ages in Sicily, this one has been used as a habitation by the living ; in the first cell to the left have been found crocks of rude earthenware of Byzantine character, and there are other signs of occupation. The cell facing the entrance was found to contain the remains of a

skeleton, some fragments of pottery and two knives, and had apparently never been disturbed; the later occupants may not even have been aware of this skeleton at their simple feasts. It presumably was that of a member of one of the principal families of the tribe for whom this sepulchre was laboriously hewn out with little tools of stone and bronze. At least three thousand years ago it was laid here; probably rude, long-forgotten rites were performed in the central chamber, while a mourning multitude crowded without. Here it kept its vigil unmoved through the centuries that its own kith lived around, through those in which the mountain was left wholly to the dead, till—two thousand years after it had been laid to rest—a humble folk, probably akin to it in blood but of new speech and faith, took its ante-chamber as their dwelling, in which generations were born and died; then again it was left long centuries in quiet, till at length it was called on to give its witness to the insatiable curiosity of a scientific age.

The inaccessibility of many of the sepulchres is very remarkable. Often their openings are high in the face of perpendicular cliffs, with so little foothold for anything like ladders at the base that they can only have been reached by cords, which grooves in the rock above show were let down to them. Suspended in the air by these the workmen must have commenced excavation, and by the same means the corpses were lowered.

On a sunny terrace halfway along the southern brow of the mountain are the remains of a building of peculiar

interest as the only edifice assignable to the Sikels, who have honeycombed the rocks of Sicily with their tombs. It is locally known as the Queen's Palace. It was about 125 feet long by 37 broad; the lowest course of masonry is of the construction known as Cyclopean, and rests on planed rock; above this are rectangular blocks, of which the faces are on an average 5 feet by 4, though several are 7 feet long, carefully squared and fitted, of a compact and very hard fossiliferous limestone, quite unlike that of the hill on which they stand; it is said there is no similar rock to be found within many miles. The labour of transporting these over a roadless country must have been immense. The ornaments and pottery that have been found indicate that the building belonged to the second Sikel period, the Bronze Age of the island. A sandstone mould, and fragments of bronze broken up as for recasting, suggest the existence of a foundry in the palace; founding was probably the monopoly of the chief. The building appears to have been altered and occupied in Byzantine times, and to have been finally destroyed by fire. Mystery hangs about a jar, said to have been found by a peasant, containing Byzantine coins, necklaces, armlets, rings, etc. Photographs of some unique and exquisite pieces of jewellery were furtively circulated, and rumours of the find reached Professor Orsi, who did all he could to secure the treasure for his museum, but both legal and private proceedings failed.

This ruined building is the only one we have of the

long period when the Sikel was alone in Sicily. It was presumably the habitation of a chief whose authority extended beyond Pantalica, and who had much labour at his disposal. When we come upon this one edifice of well-wrought stone, pertaining to a people who, however expert in hollowing rock, have left no other sign of building, we feel that outsiders must have suggested and directed the work; the Sikel Solomon must have had his Hiram, who instructed the patient native workmen.

But the building remained alone, the single substantial edifice in a population of stone-workers who only cared to employ their masonry in the service of the dead. It is as though they thought that the living for their uncertain span of existence had no need of a continuing city. Beside this flitting and fitful life how enduring and immutable was death. There were dead around them who had been laid to rest a hundred, two hundred, many hundred years ago, and still stayed where they had been left. Their very flesh crumbled into dust, and fell from their bones where they lay, but still they heeded not, nothing broke that persistent slumber. Through wars, perhaps, and great calamities, earthquake, pestilence, and famine, they had lain, mute and inscrutable, in a peace that passed understanding. For that long and lordly repose the securest house that man could fashion should be prepared. It need not be large, nor furnished with many things; they stayed very still the dead, and asked for nought but rest and quiet and their familiar surroundings; one small chamber

sufficed them, but that should be the best and strongest that could be made with hands, sealed in the eternal hills. So, patiently and painfully, with their slow ineffective tools, they carved for their dead, or, perhaps, the living provided for themselves against the day that would surely come, those dwellings in the rock—myriads of them studded in the face of cliffs, or set tier above tier in the stony slopes of hills—so carefully designed and finished that they remain to-day much as they were made thousands of years ago, and furnish the sole record that we have as to what manner of men were those who made them and were laid in them.

The old Sikels are not the only people who have writ their record in the rocks of Pantalica. At least a thousand years after there is any trace there of the Sikel, during the period that Sicily was ruled from Byzantium, the mountain became once more inhabited. The new population was grouped, like the old, near the three main ways of access, the largest community being at Filiporto. Here are remnants of about 150 rock-dwellings, of divers four-sided forms varying in area from about six to forty square yards, open in front where the rock is often left in pillars. No doubt these fronts were originally closed with masonry or wood. There are numerous sockets cut in the rock as for beam-ends, and the inner walls are hollowed as for cupboards and niches. One dwelling is much more elaborate than the rest, and must have been the residence of the chief personage of the place.

A few yards from it, opening on to a ledge of rock

from which a precipice descends perpendicularly, several hundred feet, to the Anapo, is the chapel of the little troglodytic community, known as S. Michiadario. All the arrangements indicate the Greek rite: a thin wall of rock serves as the ikonostasis, dividing the first chamber for the laity from the presbytery; at the end of this is a semicircular apse, above the arch is a yellow, white-starred nimbus, which probably surrounded the head of the glorified Redeemer that usually dominates Byzantine churches; on either side were angels, now almost obliterated; there are remains of Greek inscriptions, white uncial letters on a blue ground.

By a narrow opening in one side of the church we enter a large, irregular chamber with a separate entrance from without; it was perhaps the sacristy. Beyond it is another, perhaps the dwelling of the priest. A large chink in one corner opens above a vertical abyss; hence, tradition says, the Saracens cast down their Christian captives.

On the south slope of Pantalica is another Byzantine group of rock-dwellings. A still more humble little church, known as S. Niccolichio, is hollowed in a precipice above the Anapo, and approached along a narrow ledge. Though it is necessarily entered on the south from the face of the cliff, its little square altar has been orthodoxly hewn in an apsidal recess on the east. The whole inner surface has been frescoed, but nothing very clear is left. Two white-robed figures are supposed from the lettering to represent St. Stephen

and St. Helena. The north wall is wholly covered over with little panels of painting, which Orsi thinks votive in character: figures, landscapes, and so on, in the rudest style, but giving a certain impression of sincerity. They have been sadly mutilated by axe strokes, probably dealt by iconoclastic Saracens.

There was a third Byzantine settlement on the north, the shrine of which was the cave known as the Grotta del Crucifisso, by the side of the path that winds up from the ford over the Calcinara. On one of the walls is a medieval picture, a large head with nimbus, but there are traces of much more ancient paintings, Byzantine in character.

XXI

SIKELS, SIKELIOTS, AND SICILIANS

In the museum at Syracuse the gleanings from Sikel tombs at Pantalica and elsewhere may be seen arranged as in a book, where he who strolls may read the first chapter in the long history of Sicily. Professor Orsi has examined and recorded the collection, and the conditions in which its objects were found, in a series of elaborate and profusely illustrated monographs.

He divides the purely Sikel civilization into three main periods. The first is an example of the rudest Stone and Bone Age, very inferior as regards implements, very superior as regards pottery, to similar stages elsewhere. The Sicilian potter of the period had neither wheel nor oven, his often imperfectly kneaded clay was fashioned by the hand and baked by exposure to the sun, but in art and variety the ornamentation of his pots and bowls is immeasurably superior to the crude, linear patterns, traced with a stick while the clay was wet, by the potters of the two earlier villages of Troy. The Sikel vessel must first have been plunged in a bath that tinted the whole surface, then elaborate patterns

PORTA SPADA, MONTE SAN GIULIANO

were traced on it with some sort of brush ; in another style the grey clay was incised while still damp, and enamelled with a paste of powdered lime, and then colour was applied.

Then there was a long 'Eneolithic,' or Stone-Bronze Age, when the native stone tools were supplemented by bronze—showing some contact with peoples over sea, for Sicily produces neither tin nor copper—and it is characteristic that the most marked result of this now to be seen is increased size and elaboration in the resting-places of the dead. Unfortunately the beautiful native ceramic art was abandoned to copy foreign models, the graver replaced the brush, and variety of colour disappeared, a consequence, Orsi thinks, of the imitation in clay of imported bronze models. In our own relations with less civilized peoples, we have had to deplore a similar decadence of artistic taste as a result of contact with higher culture.

The third period is almost wholly one of bronze. Then iron is gradually introduced, and we have the first Hellenic influence. Finally we see the Sikel and Hellenic civilizations existing side by side, and in constant contact. There is also a collection of finds, mainly from Perchino, Stentinello, and Matrense, which indicate a period earlier than any of these, and possibly another race, though Professor Orsi will not let us speak of Sikans.

A striking contrast to this inchoate civilization that had not sufficient individuality to survive the breaking of its isolation, is the collection of coins that chronicle

the eager, many-sided life of the colonial Greek states. Cabinets of coins are always a delight to the eye, and replete with interest and suggestion, even to those who, like myself, cannot pretend to be numismatologists. I believe these are among the choicest collections of the kind. Merely as works of art, the money of Euainetos and Kimon represents in delicate and imaginative grace, and exquisite execution, the high-water-mark of minting. The tetradrachm reproduced on the cover of this book, designed by Euainetos to commemorate the great triumph over the Athenians —on the obverse, the Syracusan dolphins and Arethusa crowned with rushes; on the reverse, a four-horsed chariot, Victory flying above it, and weapons of the vanquished foe below—and the dekadrachm signed by the two artists, showing Persephone crowned with wheat on the obverse, Victory flying above a female figure in a chariot on the reverse, are probably the finest pieces that have ever been struck. And beyond artistic excellence, we find in these glittering cases the faith and folk-lore, the current life and thought, the long historical romance, of ancient Sicily, minted into metal. Here we see the quaint local emblems of the different city-states: the dolphins of Syracuse, the eagle and crab of Akragas, the wild celery of Selinous, the swan and nymph of hapless Kamarina; we see the different deities that each honoured as their special tutelaries, or thanked for special blessings; we trace the divinely-aided career of Timoleon the deliverer, guided on his voyage to her outraged island by the

torch of Demeter, hailed on landing by Apollo Archegetes, his consummated work made fast by Zeus the liberator, his drawing together of Sikel and Sikeliot commemorated on coins of alliance, and symbolized in the homely, happy, pensive face by which lost Herbessus personified a Sicilia in which both folk should be combined against the threatened 'barbarization' of the island; we see the same idea—an idea that has haunted all Sicilian history, but only once or twice achieved an ephemeral realization—finding expression later in the grotesque triskeles; we see the graphic representation of the restored democracies by an unbridled horse, exulting in his freedom, by Herakles with the lion's hide upon his head, by Persephone, the goddess of the soil; guided by Mr. Evans, we can read the sorry tale of the tyrannies, Dionysios' financial straits, and Agathokles' 'Despot's Progress'; we note the larger place occupied by women in a colonial community than in the more traditional society of older states, instanced in the Damarateia minted from the ornaments given by Damara, the wife of Gelon, and other Syracusan matrons, for the expedition that was to triumph over the barbarians at Himera, or the Philisteia that bears the likeness of the refined and gracious wife of Hieron II.

These coins are the most important examples of Greek art unearthed at Syracuse. The comparatively few statues found on the site of a city that was the wealthiest of the Hellenic world during the great period of Hellenic art, may be due to Roman plunderers like

Verres, but is certainly remarkable. The fine fragment known as the Venus Landolina, found in a garden of Achradina, is the most important the soil has yielded ; unfortunately the head and right arm are wanting. It is of the type common to the fourth century B.C., when sculpture commenced to allow itself familiarities with the gods, unknown to the reverential archaic styles. This example is more robust—not to say thickset—than most others ; there is no suggestion of deity or even of idealized humanity ; yet its sincerity and sure touch, especially in the moulding of the back, would probably give it place among the world's great statues had it been left the personal appeal of a face. In compensation for the dearth of statuary, there is a fascinating collection of figurines—full of life, and often singularly modern in sentiment—showing the perfection that plastic art had reached in the island.

The votary of Arethusa will do well to content himself with the beautiful presentment of her on the coins, or with looking down on the 'rocking deep,' where Shelley pictured the lovers couched, the unageing sea, swaying and surging in changeless inconstancy, looking the same to us to-day as it did to the first wanderers on its shores. The famous fountain has been transformed by municipal masonry into as prosaic a grave for a poetic legend as can well be conceived ; the most hard-pressed nymph, the most rapturous river-god, would scarcely adventure themselves in such forbidding surroundings.

Alas ! these dismal banalities are but typical of

modern Sicily. How strange it is that this enchanted island of the elder world, in whose earlier annals we can scarce distinguish between fact and fable, on whose haunted soil the spirits of earth, air and ocean, and the shades of the under-world, took upon them the likeness of men, and laid it aside at will, as though in a border-land of flesh and spirit, how strange it seems that this land, of all others, should have become one of crowded town-dwellers.

But our modern life, whether lived in town or country, is everywhere much the same. We shall search far to find the people who can cast a stone at these Sicilian city-folk. We assuredly should not be the first to do so. For us, more perhaps than for most, it has wholly passed away, the childlike creed that gave its separate spirit to tree and rock and spring, the unquestioning wisdom that tells itself

> 'In huts where poor men lie,
> Whose daily teachers have been woods and rills,
> The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The sleep that is among the lonely hills.'

It were affectation to ignore that much has been gained, but can we doubt that something has been lost, when so unimpeachable a citizen and church-goer as Wordsworth could wish he were a heathen, suckled in a creed outworn, so only he might see in nature what those younger peoples saw?

But this is what we cannot be nor see. We can no more be as the heathen, and hold their outworn creeds, than we can again be children. The slow centuries

have spun their inexorable haze behind us, and we can never again see the earth as its early dwellers saw it ; the mythology of pervading life that was with them in all their ways, an awe and a delight, must ever be to us as nursery tales.

We are coming to suspect that there was a deeper wisdom than we thought in the old belief that all the forces of the earth had fellowship with men. The very science who had seemed so carelessly destructive of everything like poetry and soul in nature, who had banished dryad and naiad from grove and fountain, had left no fairy in the glen, nor elf lurking beneath the leaves, nor gnome gibing from the rocks, no nymph bathing white limbs in the stream, or beckoning with shining eyes from the rainbow of the waterfall, seems hinting now that she will not for ever be a mere purveyor of physical utilities and gratifications, but will in time give humanity more than compensation for the dear old tales and simple lore that it learnt in childhood on the knees of nature, and can never believe again ; will make us see in what we have labelled the material universe a more abounding life than was ever fabled in the myths.

She has been by no means blameless, this enigmatic science, for the misconceptions that have harassed her ; she has been arrogant, inconsiderate, and needlessly iconoclastic, unmindful of the disconcerting effect of two and two making four on minds with a preconceived expectation of a resultant five; yet, all the while, she has been conscientiously plodding on, never daring

to speak of what was beyond her ken and touch, but persistently shoving back that line between the animate and inanimate which precisians were ever insisting must be drawn somewhere, but which we are now beginning to suspect cannot be drawn anywhere at all. It appears that perhaps, after all, the precisians were wrong and the poets and prophets were right; that 'the something far more deeply interfused,' claimed for the material universe more than a hundred years ago, in one of the noblest pages of English literature, by one who was accounted an idle dreamer among the hills, may be more than a fantastic surmise.

To him, that idle dreamer, it would have come as no new thing, but as a commonplace of his spirit's daily life, that consciousness and purpose may dwell not only in the crystal of the rock and the creeper of the forest, but in all that is—the dust beneath our feet and the wheeling systems of the skies—that we live and move in a vast network of being, interrelated, interdependent, interacting, in which the highest are linked to the lowliest forms by chains of infinite gradation that know no break nor leap. We are no more strangers and pilgrims, but have part and place in a great harmony.

From one of the oldest stories of the world we may learn a parable of the race of men. The young wanderer, when the first night of exile closed round him, laid him down upon the ground with a stone for his pillow; the dim earth stretched to the starry sky, the shades around him shaped and kindled into angel forms, mounting upwards, and passing into radiant

ranks that streamed from the world above. When he arose in the morning, he thought that surely he was in the house of God, and stood at the gate of heaven.

Then he went his way. The world closed round him ; mean ambitions and base fears clogged his soul and dragged it down: how distant seemed that holy ground and that open heaven. He had awoke, and behold it was a dream, a tale told in the gloaming to a child.

At length, in the fulness of manhood, he set his face towards his early home. Once more he laid him down by the way, and passed into the land of vision. Heaven no longer stood with open gate, hardly distinguishable from earth: it could be won only with strong wrestling and pain. But in the end he had power and prevailed ; at last it was over, the sorry round of craft and guile, petty pelf and craven fear, deceiving and being deceived, and when the sun arose upon the fords of Jabbok, the sordid, ignoble supplanter stood, renamed, in the dawn a prince of God.

And now, perhaps, science is hinting that the unwearied wrestler may win a greater boon than any that she or he have dreamed. Gravely, and with deep, questioning gaze, she seems extending a hand to that elder teacher of the race, who has always looked at her askance, and to urge that the old mistrust should be forgotten, that they twain are one in purpose and in service, fellow-seekers after truth, who have been disguised, each to other, by the mists in which they

groped ; that between the natural and the supernatural, also, there is no gulf fixed but that which ignorance has feigned, and on which she in her persistent, non-committal way, has been patiently trying to turn her search-light, and being led, by ways that she knew not, to a more understanding reverence for deeper mysteries. We thought that she was rending down the veil of the tabernacle, and telling us in mockery that there was nought behind, when she was but leading us to an inner shrine. When it seemed that she was banishing God from the great temple, she was but casting down the idols that we had made in our image and set up there.

One dreams in this ancient trysting-isle of the immortals that the elder and the younger handmaid of God may yet stand side by side, in a dawn of knowledge that we cannot now conceive, and together hail some 'ampler day divinelier lit.'

Such thoughts are as yet but the stuff that dreams are made of, visions trembling, as in a distant daybreak, seen from a mountain-top, on the edge of the long-drawn night. We—camp-followers of religion or of science, wandering amid the narrow horizons of the wilderness that shuts us in—can but receive the words of those, the seers in either camp, who have stood upon the mount of vision, and tell us that, as they strained their eyes, they saw fitful gleams of a land of promise.

XXII

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

In my first chapter I threatened the persevering reader with an outline of the history of Sicily, but I have so frequently dwelt on the history of separate city-states as I went along that any general sketch should be of the briefest.

First lies the long period, having no beginning of days, which, perhaps more than the later history, has given Sicily its peculiar place in the regard of mankind, the period of myth and legend, to whose fundamental truth earth still bears witness in devastating shudder and belching flame, and the kindly seasons in their course. In those days Enkelados, the impious offspring of earth and hell, was buried alive under Etna, where his monstrous, hundred-armed body still writhes and groans. In the same sullen vaults Hephaistos built his vast anvil, and lit the eternal fires that glare by night and fume by day from the summit; and Aïdes fashioned lurid halls of hell, where he might reign for ever with Persephone as his queen, rapt unaware from the fragrant fields of Henna. There each year she must still pass

certain gloomy months, while Demeter wanders disconsolate over the desolate earth, awaiting the beloved daughter's coming to give the tender blade and swelling bud. Then man appears in the land, the playmate and plaything of the gods, and of strange beings, monstrous or beauteous, heroic or bestial, who are neither gods nor men. Hither came much-labouring Herakles, toiling after the cattle of Geryon, whose cloven hoof-prints remained into the times of written record, wrestled with Eryx and overthrew him, and bathed his wearied limbs in warm springs broached for him by nymphs in the mountain-side, where they still well up for the healing of mortals. Nymphs and their like were everywhere. The white forms of Arethusa, Cyane, and a hundred unnamed naiads gleamed in streams and fountains that have dried or dwindled, and faun and dryad lurked and loved in the shade of vanished forests. Polyphemos, glowering with his single eye, surprised Akis and Galataia sporting in the surf, captured the far-wandering Odysseus, was blinded by his wily captive, and aimlessly hurled after him the huge rocks that may be seen to this day, lying half covered by the sea.

For this period we have the tangible evidence of natural facts, and feel no fear that any contemporary record will leap to light to disconcert received opinions. Afterwards came periods of which we cannot speak with the same certitude, or without feeling that some evidence may be disinterred, or some canon of criticism evolved, that will require us to renounce or revise all that we thought we knew. As we trace the history down it

becomes more and more obscured by controversy, till at last it is almost lost in the mist of the present day, when, as everyone acquainted with Sicilian law-courts is aware, we can affirm no fact with certainty, nor make head or tail of any statement.

In the dawn of this doubtful history we find Phœnician trading-stations dotted round the coast on islands and promontories. These gave way, and concentrated in the west, before Greek settlement, which commenced with the founding of Naxos 735 B.C. and continued for about 150 years. By the end of that period there was a fringe of Greek city-states, collectively known as Sikeliot, along the whole eastern, southern, and great part of the northern coast. The rest of the seaboard was controlled by the Phœnicians from their three stations of Motya, Panormos, and Solous. Within this coastal fringe of foreigners was a large Sikel population, which was gradually interpenetrated by Greek civilization. Sicilian history during this famous and pregnant period is a mosaic of independent narratives, which superficially often had less relation with each other than with events and peoples outside the island.

The franchise in the Sikeliot states was at first restricted to the descendants of the original settlers, beside whom an unrepresented demos grew up. Dissensions between these are perhaps an explanation of the easy acceptance of unconstitutional rulers known as tyrants, but the main reason probably was that in new countries, then as now, men are too much occupied with personal business to give much thought to affairs

of state, which are thus captured by tyrants, bosses, and caucuses.

Towards the end of the sixth century B.C. the Phœnician states became dependencies of Carthage, and were used by the great Semitic Power in its implacable strife with western civilization. In this warfare the Sikels seem, as a rule, to have been on the side of the barbarian. The attempt of the great Sikel Ducetius to win the island for its ancient people has been mentioned. In 415 B.C. came the famous Athenian expedition against Syracuse, a by-product of the Peloponnesian war. In 405 Dionysios the tyrant began his memorable rule of thirty years, during which Syracuse became the greatest city of Europe. Then Dion of Syracuse and Timoleon the Corinthian displaced the tyrants, and restored the old commonwealths. But the people either did not care or were not fit for freedom. The brilliant and unprincipled adventurer Agathokles became tyrant of Syracuse, and took up the gauntlet of Europe against Carthage. Defeated in Sicily, and with a Punic fleet blockading Syracuse, he carried the war into Africa. After great achievements and great disasters, he left Syracuse at his death the centre of a more important and extended power than ever before. His son-in-law Pyrrhos, the valiant and romantic King of Epeiros, claimed Sicily as his kingdom, seized Panormos, stormed Herkte and Eryx, and perhaps might have driven the Carthaginians into the sea, but for the jealousies and discords of the people whom he came to save. As it was, he had to leave the

island a 'wrestling ground' for more tenacious races than the Greeks.

Rome found an opportunity for intervening in the struggle between the Carthaginians and the Mamertines, or 'sons of Mars,' a freebooting commonwealth at Messina, the nucleus of which had been some disbanded mercenaries of Agathokles. Thus commenced the first Punic war, 'the war for Sicily,' and the history of the island is for some time the story of the persistent advance of Roman domination. Hieron II., the wise and good ruler of Syracuse, recognized the inevitable, and was the faithful ally of Rome, securing autonomous life for Hellenic Sicily. On his death Syracuse renounced his prudent policy, and, after a defence of unlooked-for duration, succumbed. Sicily became a province of Rome and its principal granary. Gangs of labourers captured in war, or kidnapped by pirates, cultivated its fertile hills in the most galling form of slavery, the slavery of men who were their masters' equals in all but good fortune. At the end of the second and beginning of the first century B.C. they rose in two obstinate wars, invoking the ancient and kindly gods of the island, were successful for a while, but in the end were crushed. As the central strength of Rome decayed, the wretched island seethed in anarchy, a prey to freebooters from the sea, lawless nobles in the interior, Gothic and Vandal adventurers, till Belisarius in the sixth century won it back to the Empire, now seated in Constantinople. In the ninth century the Saracens, who for some time had raided it, undertook its per-

manent conquest, which, after a century of hard fighting, they accomplished, and for more than a hundred years under Mohammedan emirs Sicily was for the first time one state. The Byzantine general Maniakes all but wrested it from them, but he was recalled through court intrigue, and his conquests lost.

In 1060 Robert and Roger de Hauteville commenced the struggle of thirty years that won back Sicily to Christendom. Roger, son of the conqueror, took the title of king. The Sicilian-Norman dynasty inherited the two highest civilizations of the day, the Greek and the Saracenic. Their court was the most brilliant and cultured in Europe; but the result of their conquest was to make Sicily Latin and not Greek. It may indeed be said that Italian was first the language of literature and government in the motley court of the northern adventurers, and that Italian song was born in the trilingual city of Palermo.

On the failure of the direct male Norman line, civil war ensued between an illegitimate branch and Henry VI. of Germany, afterwards Emperor, who had married Constance, daughter of King Roger. Henry ultimately prevailed, and was succeeded by his son Frederick, 'stupor mundi et immutator mirabilis,' of whose wide and scattered dominions Sicily was the most beloved, and under whom it attained a larger place in the world's regard than at any other period of its history. On his death there was again civil war. The Papacy, with its traditional policy of disposing of bear-skins while the animal was still at large, granted the crown first to

Edmund of England, then to Charles of Anjou, but Frederick's natural son Manfred virtually ruled the island under his half-brother Conrad and nephew Conradin, extending his dominions over sea, and but for Papal hostility might have realized the dream of a united Italy six centuries before Victor Emanuel. In 1266 he was defeated and slain at Benevento by the forces of Charles. In 1268 Charles had Conradin executed, and the French commenced the oppressive government that led to the sanguinary Vespers of 1282. Pedro of Aragon, as son-in-law of Manfred, claimed the derelict kingdom, and thus commenced Sicily's long connection with Spain. For centuries it was bandied about among different royal personages of the peninsula, but for some forty troubled years it was an independent state, with one of the freest constitutions of the day, under Pedro's third son, Frederick, who had come to the island so young that he felt himself a Sicilian, and who was first his brother's lieutenant and then king. Ferdinand the Catholic, King by inheritance of Aragon and Sicily, conquered Southern Italy, and added to his titles that of King of the Two Sicilies, a quaint style that dates from King Roger. The Peace of Utrecht assigned insular Sicily to Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, who was duly crowned King at Palermo in 1713, but soon after had to hand over Sicily to the Emperor Charles VI. in exchange for Sardinia. For the fourth time Sicily had an Emperor-King, but the Spanish Bourbon, Charles III., won both Sicilies from him, and in 1735 was the last king crowned at Palermo.

During the wars following the French Revolution, while Joseph Buonaparte and Joachim Murat reigned at Naples, the island was the refuge of the Bourbon monarchy, and from 1806 to 1815 was under British protection. The Englishman in Sicily may feel a certain pride in the thought that the last time the island was a separate autonomous state it was under his country's auspices. In 1812 Lord William Bentinck introduced a constitution on the British model, which was amusingly manipulated by the population. This was abrogated when the European settlement of 1815 restored continental Sicily to the Bourbons. Their misgovernment led to frequent revolts, marked by barbaric cruelty on both sides, till, on May 11, 1860, Garibaldi landed with his thousand, and in ten weeks made himself master of the island, which by a plebiscite on October 21, 1860, joined the kingdom of Italy. 'Her ancient memories were forgotten. Sicily became part of a free kingdom; but her king does not bear her style, and he has not taken the crown of Roger. The very name of Sicily has been wiped out; and the great island now counts only as seven provinces of the Italian kingdom.'

So wrote the hand that was fitted beyond all others to deal with this long and tangled story, but which was stayed by death when the task was only begun. It was especially in his history of this 'central island of the elder European world' that Freeman purposed to set forth the œcumenical aspect in which he always saw history steadily and saw it whole. But this

was not to be. Our loss by his premature death we can realize from the monumental and pathetic torso of four volumes in which he did little more than commence his *magnum opus*. What he would have made of a theme so congenial to him as the Norman Conquest, how he would have woven the island story into the history of the world, the decline and fall of Rome, the rise of the Papacy and of Islam, of France and Spain, the vicissitudes of the Empire, the disintegration and unification of Italy, we can but regretfully surmise. Since Keats was laid to rest in that Roman cemetery which 'might make one in love with death,' no English grave by the Mediterranean has recorded so sad a might-have-been of literature as that to which smallpox consigned Freeman at Alicante.

And now I am leaving Sicily; Palermo has shrunk to a line of white that is slowly vanishing into the indistinguishable grey of land and sea; once more the hills are flowing from form to form, and melting into the haze of the horizon, and soon the island will be but a page of memory, a panel in the picture-gallery of the mind, haunting, elusive, enigmatic, shadowed with reproach to the writer of yet another book on one of the most bewritten regions of the globe.

If it be asked why this entirely uncalled-for addition to an immemorial and immeasurable literature should be made, I have no answer, unless it be that Signor

Apologia

Pisa's sketches are sufficient raison d'être for any book that contains them, and that an unintelligible convention requires such works of art to appear with a certain padding of print, which no one takes too seriously ; few explore it beyond the dipping that enables them to find—or not to find—an account of some scene or subject that has charmed them in the pictures. Yet I shall never regret that this wholly unneeded accompaniment has been written. For, often as I may open it, I shall see, through blurred bars of print, a far-stretched sea and crowded hills overarched by sunny sky, a land of ancient enchantment that still weaves round all who know it a charm spun from many strands, old and new, elemental and complex, simple and subtle. Trite phrase and crude description, which may scarce convey any meaning to another, will be cabalistic spells to transport me where they were written. Once more I shall lie couched in asphodel and odorous herb on some lap of stony hill, and hear goatherds piping on their reeds, and waves crooning in the caverned cliffs below ; I shall sit nooked in the tawny ruin of a Doric temple, or on rock-hewn benches from which Æschylus may have watched his plays, with the selfsame setting that is still spread behind the mouldering stage. Once more I shall wander among strange cities of the dead, hollowed in mountain precipice and sea-worn cliff. I shall stand again in the serene radiance of the cathedral of Monreale, beneath walls in which a hidden fire appears to tremble, or in that sacramental chapel at Palermo, where jewelled and

sculptured stone, filtering light and brooding shadow, seem transubstantiated into prayer and benediction. To one reader the book, whose unworthiness of its subject he knows better than any critic, will be as a magic volume of incantation to make the past present, and the distant near. I shall be quite content though it never wander beyond that little public which is all its own.

INDEX

Æschylus, 89, 260
Agathokles, 97, 291, 301
Aigadian Islands, 137, 140
Akragas, 154-166
Alcamo, 95
Alkibiades, 221
Archimedes, 227
Architecture:
  Doric, 14, 98-102, 112, 157-163, 235
  Gothic, 35, 37, 39, 138, 156, 237
  Renascence, 60, 193, 235-236, 238
  Saracenic, 17, 19, 42, 58
  Siculo-Norman, 14-29, 39-60, 156
Arethusa, 290, 292
Asphalt, 273
Assinaros, 226
Athenian Expedition, 94, 96, 221-226, 269, 272, 301
Augusta, 215
Augusta Victoria, Borgo, 249

Bagli, 120
Beggars, 195
Belisarius, 302
Bentinck, 305
Berbers, 156
Bizerta, 216
Blakeney, 246
Bosco, 238, 246
Brown, 248, 273
Butler, 135
Byzantine period, 9, 281-287, 302

Caccia, la, 78
Calacta, 210
Calatafimi, 131
Caltagirone, 211
Caltanisetta, 33
Cannitas, Pizzo, 87
Carini, 95
Carthage, 8, 79-81, 88-91, 109, 121-126, 136, 155-156, 227, 256, 301
Carts, 64, 67
Castelvetrano, 105
Castrogiovanni, 211-215
Catalfano, Monte, 87
Catania, 203-207
Cavoni, I, 208
Cefalù, 44-49
Charles of Anjou, 137, 304
Charles III., 304
Chauvie, 178
Cicero, 214, 228
Cofano, 141
Coins, 289-291
Colonies, 105-108
Columbus, 66
Conrad, 304
Conradin, 71, 304
Constance, 26, 27, 303
Contastorie, 64
Corinth, 220, 222, 252, 256
Cresima, 55
Custonaci, 141

Dancing, 196-200
Davis, 246
Delli, 207
Demeter, 125, 213, 255, 279, 299
Demosthenes, 223
Dionysios I., 96, 122, 202, 227, 262, 291, 301
Drake, 244
Drepana, 136
Ducetius, 208-210, 252, 277, 301

Earthquake, 110, 167-186, 204, 241-251, 273
Edward I., 137
Elia, S., 87
Elopement, 192
Elymians, 6, 93, 104, 141
Empedocle, Porto, 166
Eryx, 135, 138-143
Etna, 188, 202, 203, 204, 205, 212, 263
Evans, 291

Femmine, Isola delle, 94
Ferdinand the Catholic, 304
Ferdinand I., 25
Frederick II., 26-27, 95, 303
Frederick of Aragon, 304
Freeman, 13, 26, 48, 201, 305
Fuga, 25

Gagini, 28, 37-38
Ganzi, 33
Garibaldi, 50, 69, 130-134, 305
Gela, 154
Girgenti, 154-166
Giuliano, Monte San, 135, 137, 138-143
Gongylos, 222, 252
Gray, 120, 127
Greci, Piana dei, 85
Greig, 173, 248
Gylippos, 222, 252

Hamilkar Barak, 80, 136
Hamilkar, son of Hannon, 89
Hannibal, son of Giskon, 90-91, 109
Hannibal, son of Hamilkar, 8
Henna, 211-214
Henry VI., 26-27, 303
Herbessus, 291
Herkte, 76, 79, 301
Hermokrates, 110, 253
Hieron II., 259, 291-302
Himera, 88-91
Himilkon, 97, 123, 227, 271
Huleatt, 172, 248
Hunt, 246
Hykkara, 94

Joachim Murat, 305
Joseph Buonaparte, 305

Kale Akte, 210
Kockel, 247
Kolmers, 248
Krimisos, 95, 256

Lais, 94
Lamachos, 221, 222
Land tenure, large, 147
small, 145
Lanza, 132
Latifondo, 93, 147-149
Licata, 33
Lilybaion, 126, 128
Lipari, 127
Livy, 214
Lobb, 248
Lucia, Sta., 242
Lutatius Catulus, 135, 140

Mafia, 70-75
Magnisi, 216-219
Malta, 129, 140, 273
Mamertines, 168, 302
Maniakes, 303
Marcellus, 227, 263, 271
Marionettes, 62, 67-70
Marsala, 118-121, 130
Mazara, 117
Medievalism, 63, 70
Megara Hyblaia, 105, 216
Menænum, 206
Messana, 168
Messina, 10, 167-186
Metopes, 35-36, 99, 112
Milk-supply, 77
Mille, 2, 130-134, 305
Mineo, 206
Modica, 273
Monreale, 50-59, 307
Motya, 8, 121-126
Murat, 305
Museum, Palermo, 34-36
Syracuse, 288-292
Mythology, 9, 102, 115, 294, 298

Index

Naxos, 201
Nicola, S., 165
Nikias, 94, 216, 221-226, 271
Normans, 2, 10-14, 42, 62, 134

Orsi, 202, 217, 253, 275, 279, 280, 283, 287, 288-289
Ortygia, 220, 230

Palermo, 3-41
  Cala, 8
  Capella Palatina, 14-20, 55, 307
  Cathedral, 23-29
  Cuba, la, 50
  Cubola, la, 50
  Mare Dolce, Castello di, 87
  Martorana, 40
  Museum, 34-36
  neighbourhood, 76-91
  Palazzo Reale, 15-21
  Porta Nuova, 50
  S. Cataldo, 41
  S. Caterina, 60
  S. Cita, 37
  S. Giovanni degli Eremiti, 39
  S. Giovanni dei Lebbrosi, 87
  S. Gregorio, 40
  S. Maria e Gésu, 87
  S. Niccolo, 85
  S. Pietro, 14-20
  S. Salvatore, 60
  S. Spirito, 87
  Steri, lo, 37
  Trilingual City, 15, 24, 303
  Ziza, la, 21
Palica, 208
Palici, 208
Panormos, 6-13
Pantaleo, S., 121-130
  Padre, 133
Pantalica, 279-287
Pantellaria, 129, 140
Parco, 21
Pedro of Aragon, 137, 304
Pellegrino, Monte, 76-84
Perchino, 289
Pergusa, Lake, 211
Petrosino, 73
Phalaris, 154, 165
Phœnicians, 6-8, 79-81, 89, 117, 141, 300
Piana dei Greci, 85
Pianto dei Romani, 131
Piazza Armerina, 211
Plemmyrion, 220, 271
Ploughs, 150
Polytheism, 9, 102, 294
Punic wars, 9, 79-81, 137, 156, 168, 302
Pyrrhos, 92, 168, 301

Queen Elena, 81, 183
  Margherita, 81

Ragusa, 273
Red Cross, 242, 247-249
Renascence, the, 236
Ricco, 205
Robert Wiscard, 10, 26, 87, 168, 303
Rocca, la, 50
Rocche di Cusa, 114
Roger, Grand Count, 26, 138, 148, 303
Roger, King, 18, 20, 25, 54, 303
Romans, 9, 79-81, 168, 227-228, 302
Rosalia, Sta., 81-84
Rotolo, 133

Saints, 29-34
Saracenic art, 17, 22, 37, 42, 58
Saracens, 2, 9, 62, 110, 118, 156, 286, 302
Schisò, 201
Segesta, 95-104
Selinous, 96, 108-116
Selinunte, 105
Semites, 9, 12, 90, 117, 125
Sergi, 6, 94, 275
Sicilian character, 33, 45, 52, 62-75, 118, 134, 191, 200, 210, 247
  vespers, 87, 137, 304

Sikans, 6, 13, 93, 275, 289
Sikels, 208-210, 216-219, 275-285, 288-289, 300
Sladen, 55
Socialism, 153
Solous, 8, 88
Spaniards, 24, 25, 137, 304
Squadre, 131
Stagnone, 121
Stentinello, 289
Sulphur, 152
Sutlej, H.M.S., 173, 244
Syracuse, 220-274
  Agora, 252
  altar, 257
  amphitheatre, 257
  Arethusa, fountain of, 292
  catacombs, 264
  Cathedral, 231-236
  Epipolai, 222
  Euryalos, 221, 262
  Isola, 271
  Jesuits, Church of the, 249
  latomie, 267
  Maniace, Castle of, 237
  Museum, 288-292
  Olympieion, 271
  Ortygia, 220, 230
  Palaistra, 253
  Palazzo Arcivescovale, 231
    Bellomi, 237
    Bosco, 238
    Lanza, 237
    Montalto, 237
  Pisma, la, 270
  Plemmyrion, 220, 271
  Rotonda, 253
  S. Giovanni, 263
  S. Giovanello, 237
  S. Madre dei Miracoli, 237
  S. Maria delle Colonne, 231
  S. Martino, 237
  S. Marziano, 264
Syracuse, S. Pietro, 237
  S. Tomaso, 237
  temples, 230, 231, 263, 271
  theatre, 258
  Timoleonteion, 255
  tombs, street of, 262
  Villa Politi, 270
  wall of Dionysios, 263

Taormina, 187-202
Tasca, 50
Telamones, 156
Temples, 12, 14, 98-104, 112-115, 155, 157-164, 230-235, 271
Thapsos, 216-219, 263
Theatres, 98, 188, 259
Thomas à Becket, 118
Thucydides, 10, 221-226
Timoleon, 95, 253, 255-257, 261, 301
Tombs of the Kings, 25-27
Toscano, 244
Trapani, 135-138

Uniat Church, 85
Utrecht, Peace of, 304

Valetta, 274
Valsavoia, 206
Vespers, Sicilian, 87, 137
Victor Amadeus, 304
Victor Emmanuel II., 20, 81, 183

Walter of the Mill, 23, 29
Weit, 248
Whitaker, 119, 120, 126, 273
William II., 55, 56, 57, 81, 83
Wordsworth, 42, 58, 159, 204 293, 295
Wren, 61

Zankle, 167

BILLING AND SONS, LTD., PRINTERS, GUILDFORD

13330

DG
862.5
.M85

Musson, S. C.

Sicily.

'71 '81 (2 issues)

DATE	ISSUED TO
AUG 26 1980	Georgia Kelly Staff

13330

DG
862.5
.M85